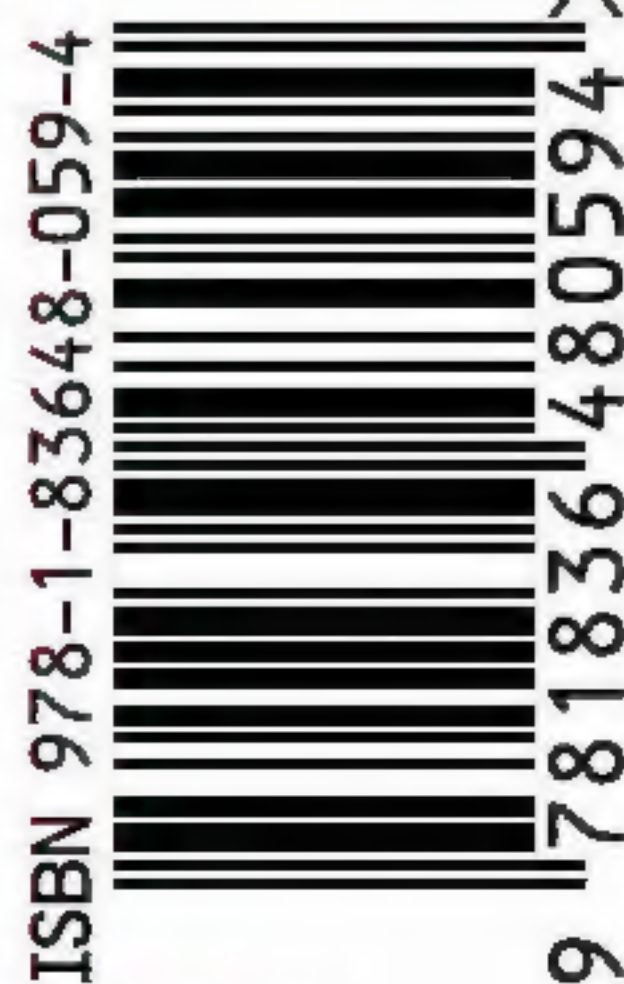
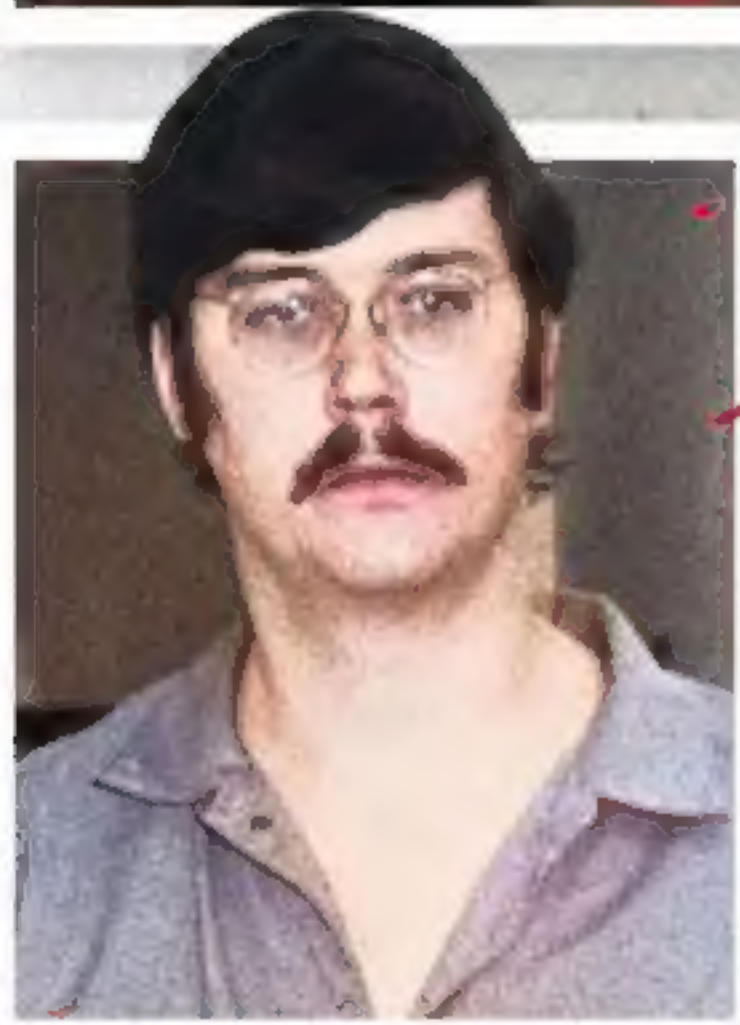


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# DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS

THE KILLERS WHO HID THEIR SICK FANTASIES IN PLAIN SIGHT...



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WELCOME TO

# DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS

**P**sycho­paths are all around us, craving both power and authority – but most find ways to sate their desires through high-flying careers or adrenaline-fuelled experiences. A handful, however, get their thrills hidden in the shadows of society, manipulating, terrifying and terrorising the powerless around them. In this brand-new book from the makers of Real Crime magazine, we explore the stories of some of history's sickest psychopaths, from perverts like Bob Berdella who basked in the torturous pain he inflicted on his captives, to the sickly sweet façade of Dorothea Puente, whose doting grandma persona hid a terrifying lust for blood and money. Elsewhere, find out how modern forensic techniques nailed the killers of decades-old unsolved cases, and explore the horrors of HH Holmes's 'Murder Castle'.



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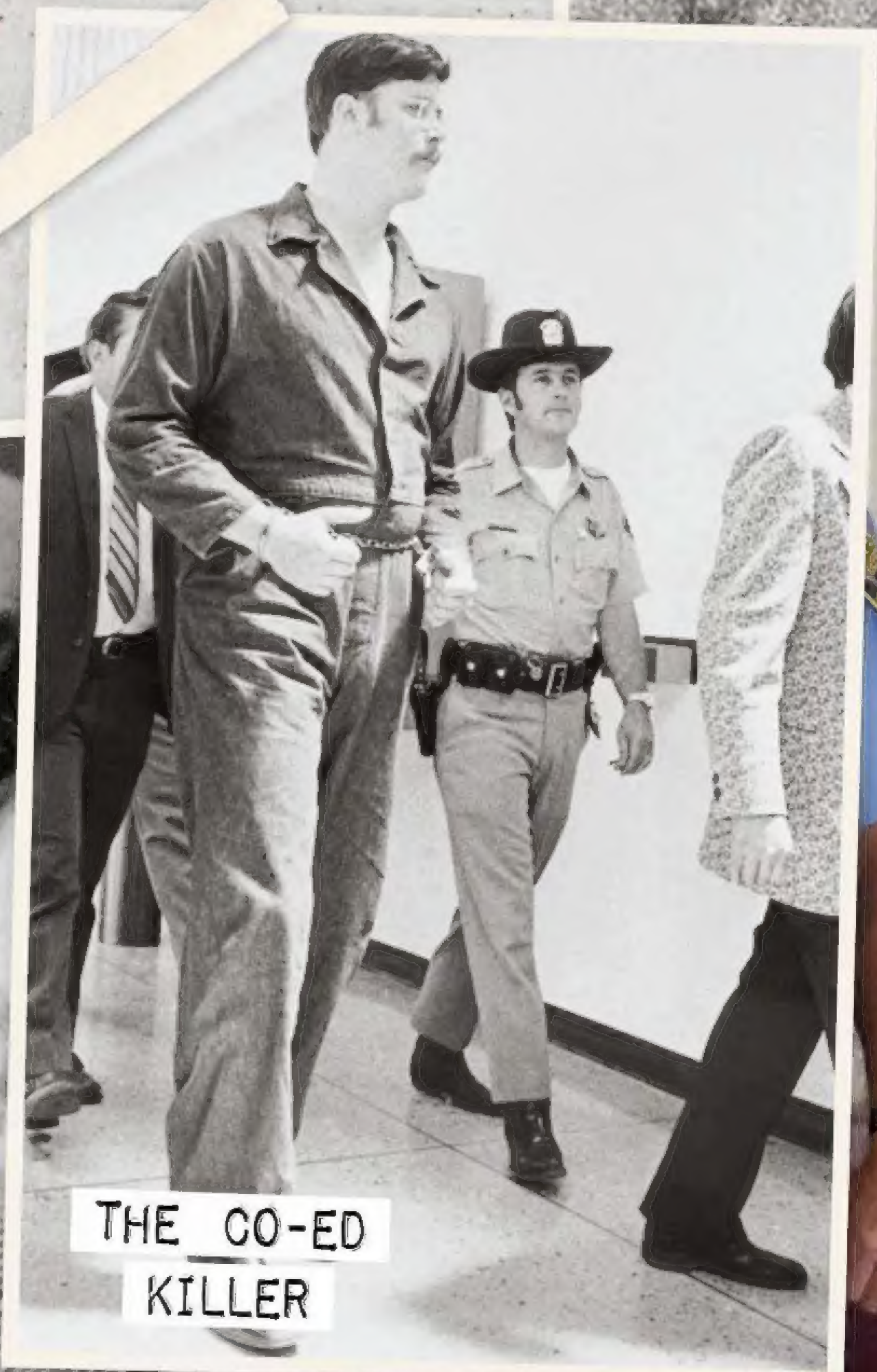
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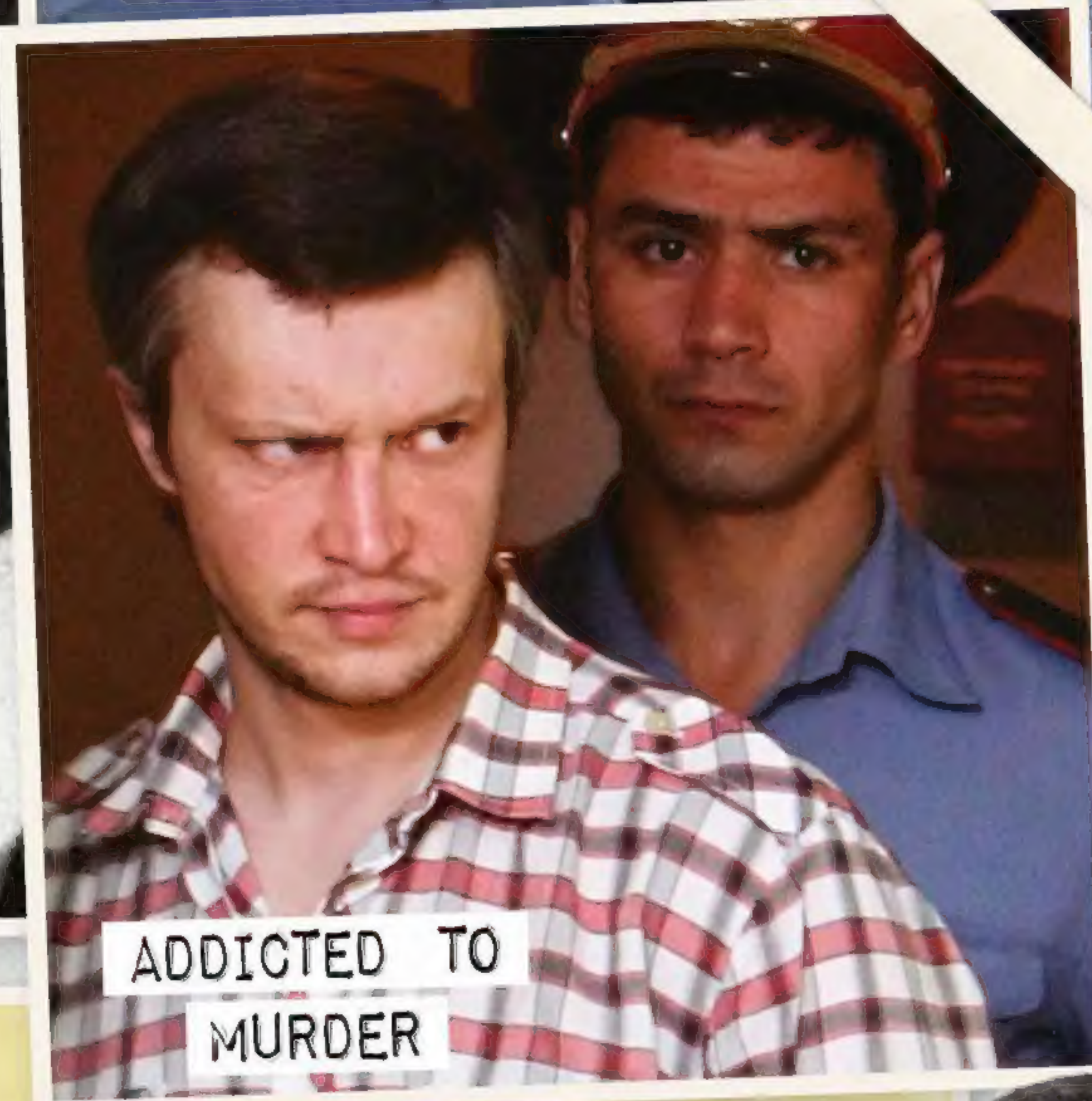
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OF EVIL



DEATH HOUSE  
LANDLADY



THE  
SLEEPING  
MONSTER



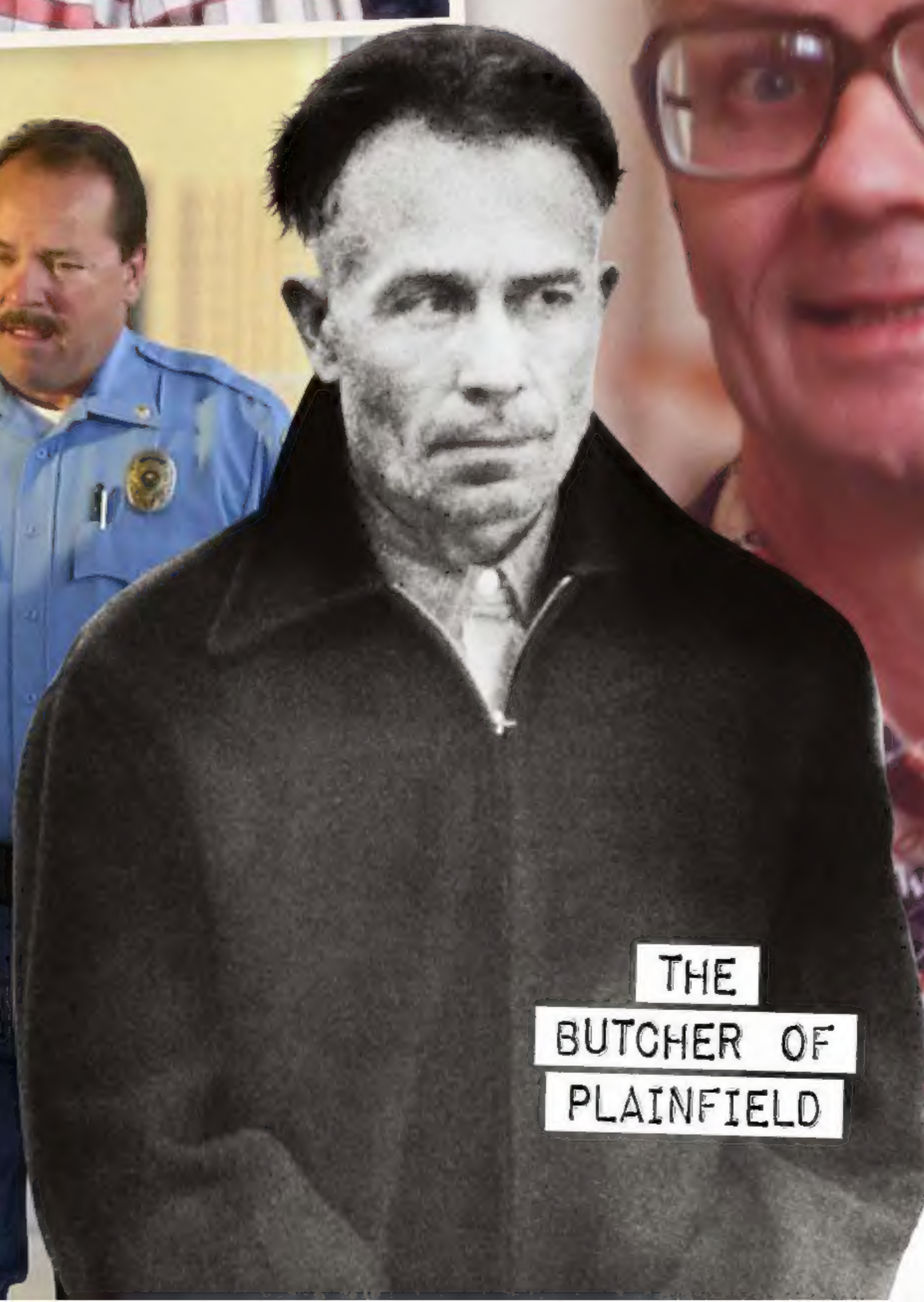
ADDICTED TO  
MURDER



THE RED  
RIPPER



THE 'GAME'  
OF BTK



THE  
BUTCHER OF  
PLAINFIELD



# MURDER HOTEL

SELDOM HAS ANY SERIAL KILLER IN HISTORY GONE TO THE EXTREMES THAT HH HOLMES WENT TO. HIS 'CASTLE' WAS A MONUMENT TO MASS MURDER ON AN INDUSTRIAL SCALE, AS WELL AS A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS TO BOOT

WORDS ROBERT WALSH

In the 1950s legendary film of the same name, director Orson Welles called Scotland Yard's 'Black Museum' a "mausoleum of murder." If any building truly fitted that description, it was Chicago's World's Fair Hotel. Run by the USA's most elaborate serial killer (and qualified physician) Doctor Herman Holmes, it catered for his darkest desires.

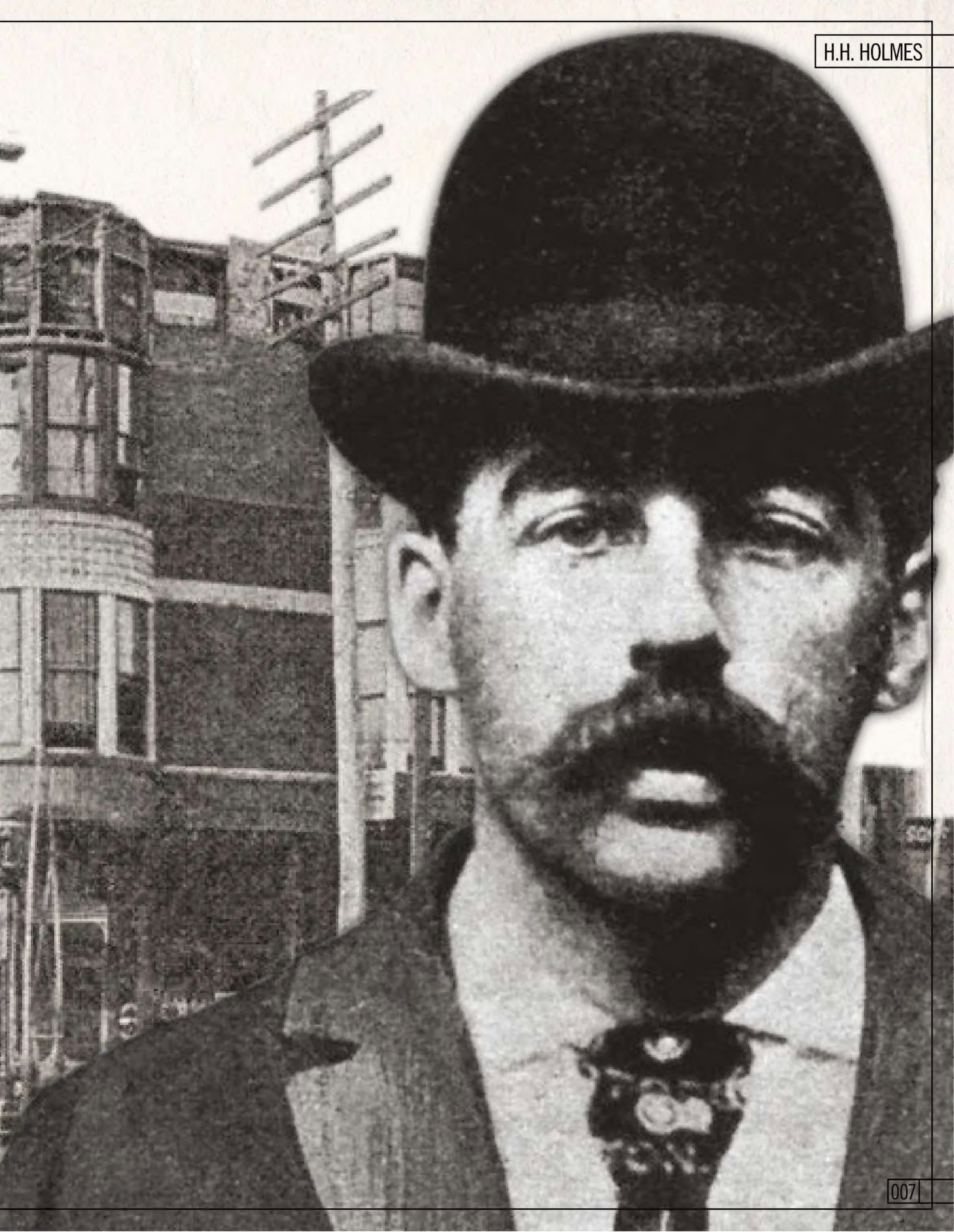
Born Herman Webster Mudgett in Gilmanton, New Hampshire, in 1860, Henry Howard Holmes (one of many aliases) was a bigamist, conman, serial killer and a doctor, who attended medical school at the University of Michigan. His father was a violent alcoholic and Herman was bullied at school. Once, his bullies took him to a doctor's office and tormented him with a skeleton, running its bony hands over his face. Holmes later admitted that he was at first terrified, but began thoroughly enjoying the experience. Perhaps it opened a door in his mind that should have remained firmly shut. Abused, powerless people often become power-seeking abusers in later life. While money buys power, harming others provides an extra thrill. For many serial killers, the motive is one or the other. Holmes wanted both.

At medical school he operated insurance scams, stealing cadavers from the mortuary and rendering them unrecognisable to make fraudulent claims. Under various aliases he operated confidence schemes in several states, but it was in Chicago that he built his 'Murder Castle', a monument to the lowest forms of deviancy.

Named the World's Fair Hotel, 'The Castle' (as locals called it) opened in time for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, an exhibition showcasing inventions appealing to Americans at the time. It was one of the most successful









# THE 'MURDER CASTLE'

HOLMES'S HOTEL WAS A PURPOSE-BUILT DEATH FACTORY LURING VICTIMS TO THEIR SADISTIC DEATH AND BUSINESS-LIKE DISPOSAL

It would be accurate to say that no other American serial killer has developed so sophisticated and dedicated a style as Holmes. His hotel was unlike anything Americans had ever seen before, appalling and traumatising even hardened detectives. The idea of a house of horrors controlled by a sadistic psychopath who tortures and kills their house guests has filtered into popular culture, providing inspiration for horror movies, books and video games. Unfortunately for untold victims, the World's Fair Hotel wasn't a movie set and Holmes wasn't a figment of a screenwriter's imagination. HH Holmes was all too real.

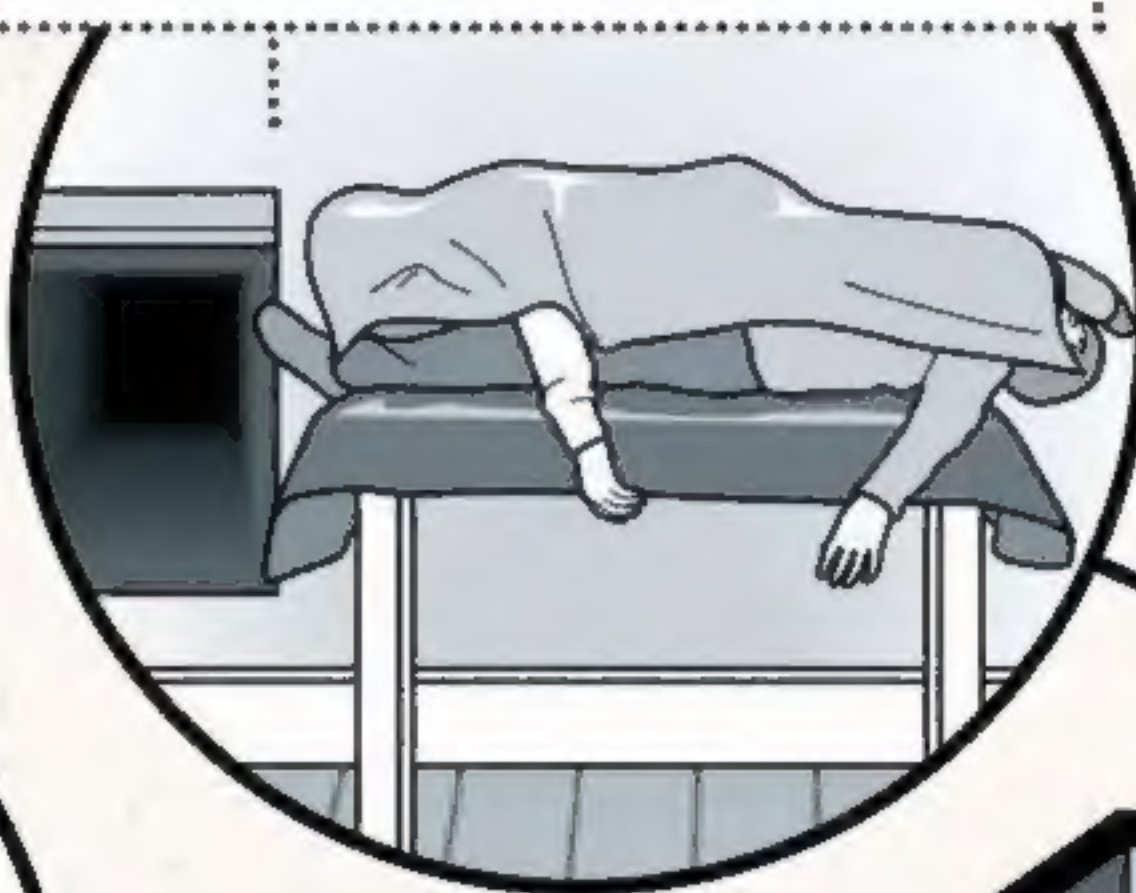
## DARK ROOM

An airtight metal vault next to Holmes's office used for storage and as a gas chamber. A hidden gas line was controlled from the office, although Holmes sometimes simply let victims run out of air.



## SECRET HIDING PLACE

Next to the chute, this was a safe and convenient place for Holmes to temporarily conceal corpses before moving them down to the basement through the chute.



## TRAP DOORS

The trap doors led down from guest rooms. Holmes used them for moving either corpses or drugged victims to be murdered or disposed of in the basement.



## ASPHYXIATION CHAMBER

An airtight room used by Holmes to slowly suffocate victims. With a victim either lured in or carried there heavily drugged, Holmes often stood outside the room and listened to them suffer.

## FALSE DOORS

Sadistic Holmes would toy with his 'guests' before they were killed. A number of the hotel's doors opened to walls, to confuse and dismay.



## OFFICE

Holmes's office included his silent alarm system. Holmes knew when people moved around the hotel and could locate precisely where they were by silent alarms linked to every door.

## RECEPTION ROOM

Hell's antechamber, fresh victims were lured through here and persuaded to rent a room in this particular devil's playground. It was their last contact with the outside world, they just didn't know it yet.



**THE MAZE**

Not the nicest place to stumble around, groggy and terrified, while recovering from an unexpected dose of chloroform. Holmes thoroughly enjoyed psychological cruelty. Murder was a business to him, but it was also his passion.



**“ I WAS BORN WITH THE DEVIL IN ME. I COULD NOT HELP THE FACT THAT I WAS A MURDERER, NO MORE THAN THE POET CAN HELP THE INSPIRATION TO SING... ”**

exhibitions of the age. Thousands flocked to Chicago needing hotels. Many of Holmes's guests never left alive.

**A MONUMENT TO MURDER**

The hotel was built on a vacant lot, formerly the site of a drugstore owned by Elizabeth Holton, who employed Holmes as a general assistant. Holton, wanting to retire, sold it to Holmes in 1889 not knowing he raised the money by secretly mortgaging the stock, fixtures and fittings. To Holmes, that didn't matter. Holton disappeared shortly afterward never to be seen again. Whenever anybody asked, Holmes claimed she had moved to California. The drugstore was demolished and the Castle began to take shape.

Holmes cleverly organised its construction. He repeatedly hired and fired builders, claiming they'd done shoddy work.

In doing so he ensured each contractor knew little of the building's layout and avoided arousing suspicion. By its opening in 1893, a very strange layout it was too. The drugstore was relocated to the ground floor along with some other small shops. The second floor and basement of the three-storey building were where the hotel's real business was done. That was, the casual, sadistic slaughter of guests, employees, Holmes's lovers and anybody that he either considered problematic or simply felt like murdering.

His victims were mainly women, but not always. Holmes made it a condition for employees to arrange life insurance. He paid the premiums and was the sole beneficiary, which was convenient when they began dying with unusual regularity. Holmes's hotel wasn't just a mausoleum of murder; he turned serial killing into a lucrative business.

His office was on the second floor, which the hotel janitor was instructed never to clean along with the basement. Here, there were staircases seemingly leading nowhere and ending with blank walls, blind corridors without exits and doors that could be opened only from the outside. Every door was connected to a silent alarm allowing Holmes to know whether anybody attempted to escape, instantly locating them by which door alarm they tripped.

Holmes's office storeroom was also airtight – a steel vault disguised as an ordinary room. It was one of his favourite pranks to ask an employee to fetch something from it. Once

they'd entered, Holmes slammed the door and turned on the gas. Natural gas takes time to fill a room, affording Holmes maximum enjoyment as he listened to them die.

Many of the bedrooms were also airtight with gas pipes connected – pipes providing neither light nor heat. One of Holmes's favourite methods was to wait until a victim was asleep and then switch on the gas, listening closely from outside as they struggled, panicked and slowly suffocated. For light sleepers, his master key and a strong dose of chloroform rendered them helpless, entirely at his nonexistent mercy.

A secret hanging chamber contained a small gallows. Legal hangings were meant to kill instantly and painlessly, but Holmes preferred to slowly strangle his victims. The power of life and death wasn't enough, nor was the money he made. Holmes wanted and possibly needed to inflict the maximum possible suffering. That was amply proved by another secret room made of solid brick, only accessible through a trapdoor in the ceiling. Holmes liked to chloroform some victims and then leave them there to die of starvation and dehydration.

Having turned the upper floors into a purpose-built death factory, Holmes also included a variety of ways to dispose of his victims. A false lift linked the upper floors to a real-life chamber of horrors. The basement contained two large furnaces for cremations. There were large drums filled with concentrated acid. Lime pits and a dissection table were also prepared, and Holmes used them regularly.

**PARTNERS IN CRIME**

Holmes didn't act entirely alone. His henchman, the stooge he was later hanged for murdering, was Benjamin Pitezal. Holmes recruited Pitezal in 1889 after bailing him out of jail to help in insurance scams. Pitezal was later described by a district attorney as: "Holmes's tool... His creature."

Pitezal was Holmes's closest accomplice, helping with scams, luring new victims and delivering skeletons to medical schools. Pitezal didn't know that Holmes always intended to murder him. As Holmes wrote, "Even before I knew he had a family who would afford me additional victims for the gratification of my desires, I intended to kill him."

So the time came for Holmes to kill his trusty accomplice, as usual at a profit. He had fled Chicago in 1893, leaving somewhere between 27 and 250 victims. After Holmes abandoned the Castle, police arrived and his secret was out. Having gone to Texas, then Indiana, Toronto and Philadelphia, Holmes persuaded Pitezal to adopt the alias 'BF Perry' for an insurance scam. Holmes told Pitezal he would provide an unrecognisable corpse supposedly killed in a lab explosion, claim the insurance and split it with him. Unfortunately for Pitezal, who knew too much, the corpse would be his own. Holmes chloroformed him, burning his corpse with benzene before claiming the insurance.

Another accomplice, former train-robber and gunslinger Marion Hedgepeth, was Holmes's downfall. While in Fort Worth, Texas, in July 1894, Holmes was briefly incarcerated after a failed scam. Hedgepeth had been his accomplice and they shared a cell. While in jail, Holmes had admitted his

**BATHROOM**

Victims disappeared down the hidden chute into the basement, being shifted like sacks of laundry or rubbish. Holmes preferred to make a more leisurely and comfortable entrance.

**SEALED ROOM**

This was entirely bricked off and accessible only through a trapdoor in the guest room above. Holmes used this room to leave victims dying from hunger and thirst.





## A LUCRATIVE TRADE

HOLMES HAD A CONSTANT SUPPLY OF CORPSES TO DISPOSE OF; HE OFTEN DID SO AT A PROFIT

Holmes's basement included a stretching rack, dissecting table and a full set of surgical instruments. Once a victim's body had been stripped of its flesh and organs, which could safely disappear into one of his furnaces, the bones remained. Modern crematoriums usually grind bones to powder once a cadaver has been cremated, but the money-motivated Holmes opted for something chillingly practical.

Holmes sometimes employed 'articulator' Charles Chappell to reconstruct full skeletons that were then sold to medical schools. In doing so, Holmes safely disposed of victims while developing a lucrative sideline. Murder was his business as well as his passion. It's a disturbing thought that, even today, junior medical students may be learning basic anatomy courtesy of one of the USA's most dedicated, and deadly, mass murderers.



**ABOVE** The 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition ferris wheel: Holmes capitalised on this renowned exposition and the many visitors who would be looking for rooms

## “ HE IS A PRODIGY OF WICKEDNESS, A HUMAN DEMON ”

CHICAGO TIMES-HERALD

real name, having previously promised Hedgepeth \$500 for recruiting a lawyer to take part in the fraud.

On his release, Holmes fled, leaving Hedgepeth with nothing. Hedgepeth wanted revenge and to cut a deal. He gave authorities Holmes's latest alias and location, identifying him as the man now wanted in Chicago. After Holmes fled Chicago, his creditors and then detectives had visited the World's Fair Hotel and been traumatised by what they found.

### END OF THE LINE

Pinkerton detectives tracked him to Boston, where he was arrested, ostensibly regarding the Texas scam. In reality, they feared he was about to flee the country and they wanted extra time to continue investigating the Castle.

What they had uncovered appalled even the toughest detectives. They found the gas chambers masquerading as hotel rooms. The false lift led them to the basement where they discovered the stretching rack, acid drums, furnaces, lime pits, bloodstained dissection table and surgical instruments, a pile of bloodstained clothing, human hair and dozens of random bones from now-unidentifiable victims. It was suspected that anywhere from 27 (he admitted to that many) to 250 victims checked into the hotel and checked out via the basement. A secret oil tank in the basement wall was discovered by accident when a workman lit a match, detonating fumes that, according to experts, were toxic enough to be lethal within minutes. Holmes never defined the tank's purpose, but it may have been another gas chamber. Further investigations uncovered the insurance scam and murder of Benjamin Pitezal.

Holmes was tried for murdering Pitezal in October 1895, by which time his killing spree was public knowledge. Whatever the verdict in Pennsylvania, he still faced trial and certain execution in Illinois for running the Murder Castle. Pitezal's wife and three of his children had disappeared while in

Holmes's care and been found murdered, giving prosecutors another chance if they needed it. In the end, they didn't. Holmes was convicted and condemned to hang.

Facing certain execution in Pennsylvania and probable execution elsewhere, Holmes did what many serial killers do in similar circumstances: he confessed. As usual he profited, selling his confession to a newspaper for \$7,500. He admitted running the Murder Castle, to murders in Toronto (Mrs Pitezal and the children) and to other murders in Indiana and Illinois. The end came on 7 May 1895 at Moyamensing Prison, Philadelphia. Holmes was calm and composed, enjoying his notoriety and devoid of remorse. His somewhat ironic last request was to have his coffin encased in concrete to stop grave-robbers selling his remains. His last words were typically indifferent. As Deputy Superintendent Richardson positioned the noose, Holmes said: "Take your time, old man." Richardson did just that. Either the drop was too short or the noose was incorrectly placed, and Holmes strangled for 20 minutes before finally dying.

In August 1895, the Castle was gutted by fire. Witnesses reported two men leaving the building shortly before several large explosions tore through it. Locals suspected the arsonists were either other accomplices hoping to destroy evidence or (more likely) outraged locals wanting to avoid the building becoming a morbid tourist attraction. The structure survived until 1938, when it was replaced by the Englewood branch of the US Postal Service standing there today.

Another, rather more chilling postscript comes from another American serial killer, also a doctor. When Michael Swango (nicknamed 'Double O' for his apparent licence to kill) was arrested in 1997 for murdering dozens of patients, police found a notebook referencing serial killers. One was Holmes, who Swango described almost with awe: "He could look at himself in a mirror and tell himself that he was one of the most powerful and dangerous men in the world, he could feel that he was a god in disguise."



# HOLMES'S ARCHITECTURAL NIGHTMARE

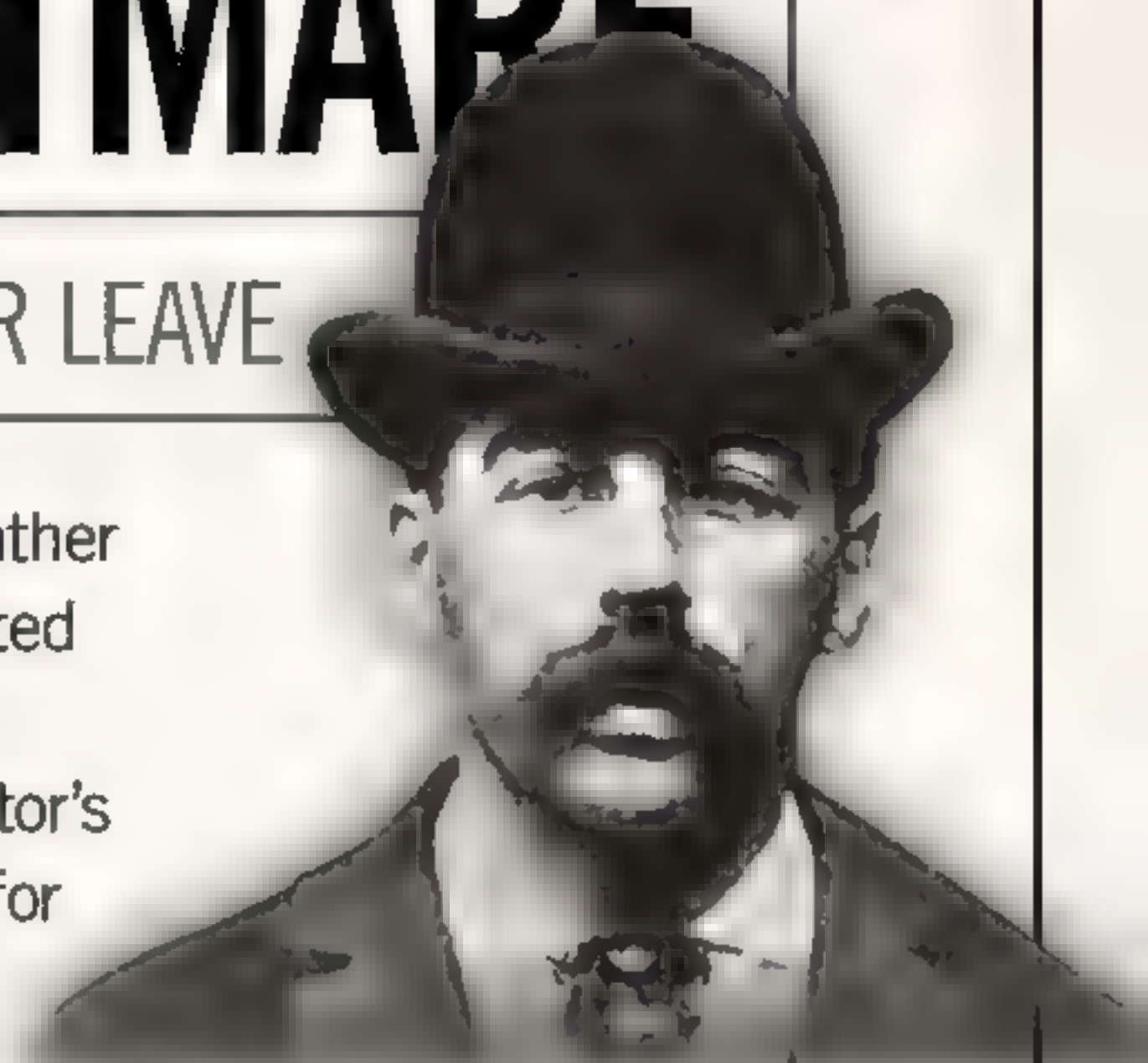
WELCOME TO THE MURDER CASTLE: YOU CAN CHECK OUT ANY TIME YOU LIKE, BUT YOU CAN NEVER LEAVE

Proprietor's name:  
**HERMAN WEBSTER MUDGETT AKA HERMAN HOWARD HOLMES**

Born:  
**16 MAY 1861, GILMANTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Died:  
**7 MAY 1896, MOYAMENSING PRISON, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

Holmes's childhood was abusive and cruel. His father was a violent alcoholic and school bullies tormented him relentlessly. It's suggested that his perverse nature surfaced when they cornered him at a doctor's office and traumatised him with a skeleton used for anatomy demonstrations.



## 51 DOORWAYS

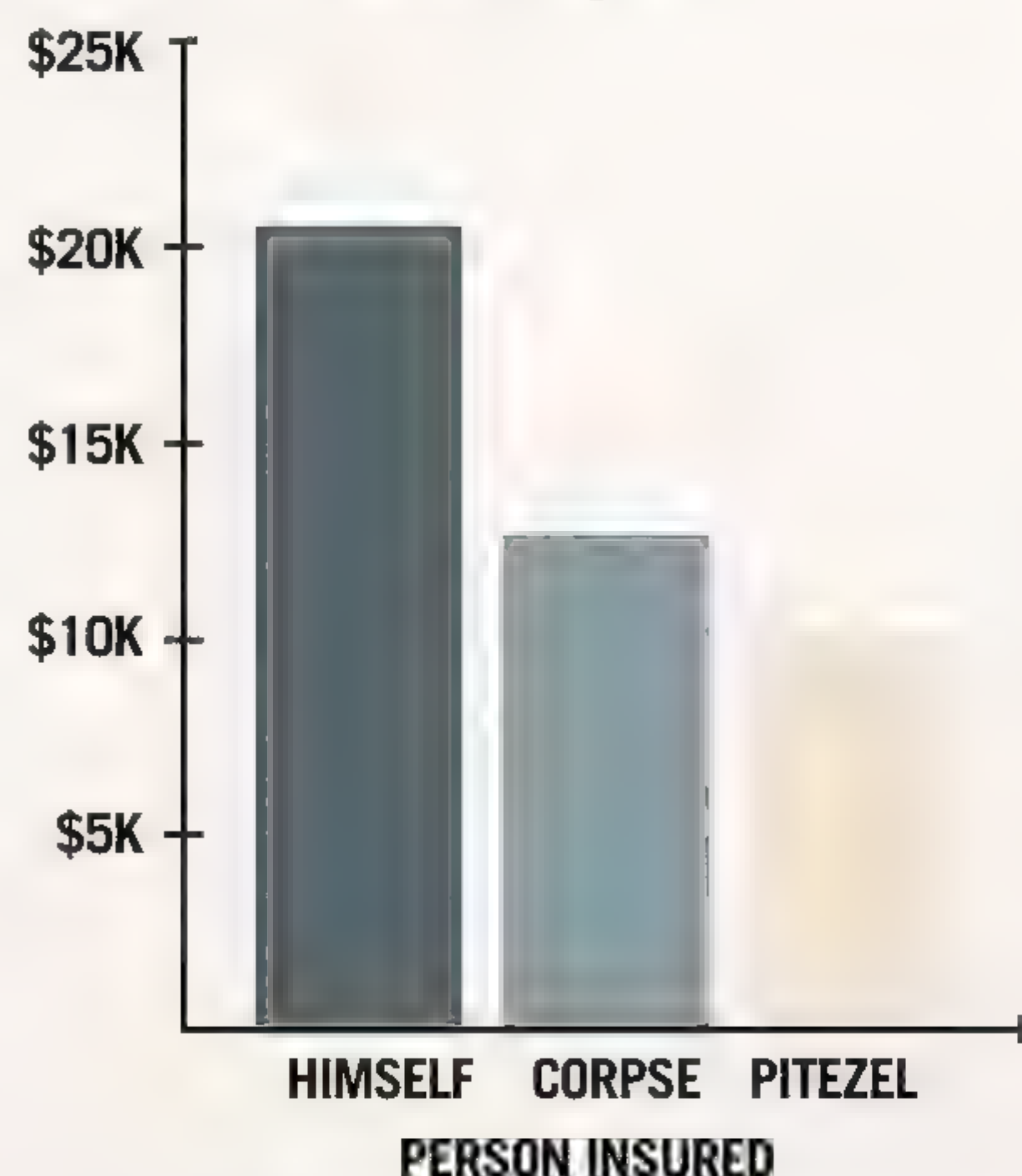
The 'Murder Castle' had many doorways leading only onto blank walls to confuse and frighten any victim who was attempting to make their escape.

## 100 WINDOWLESS ROOMS

The guest rooms lacked windows. Once locked inside, victims had no way to alert anybody to their plight. Nor could they be seen.

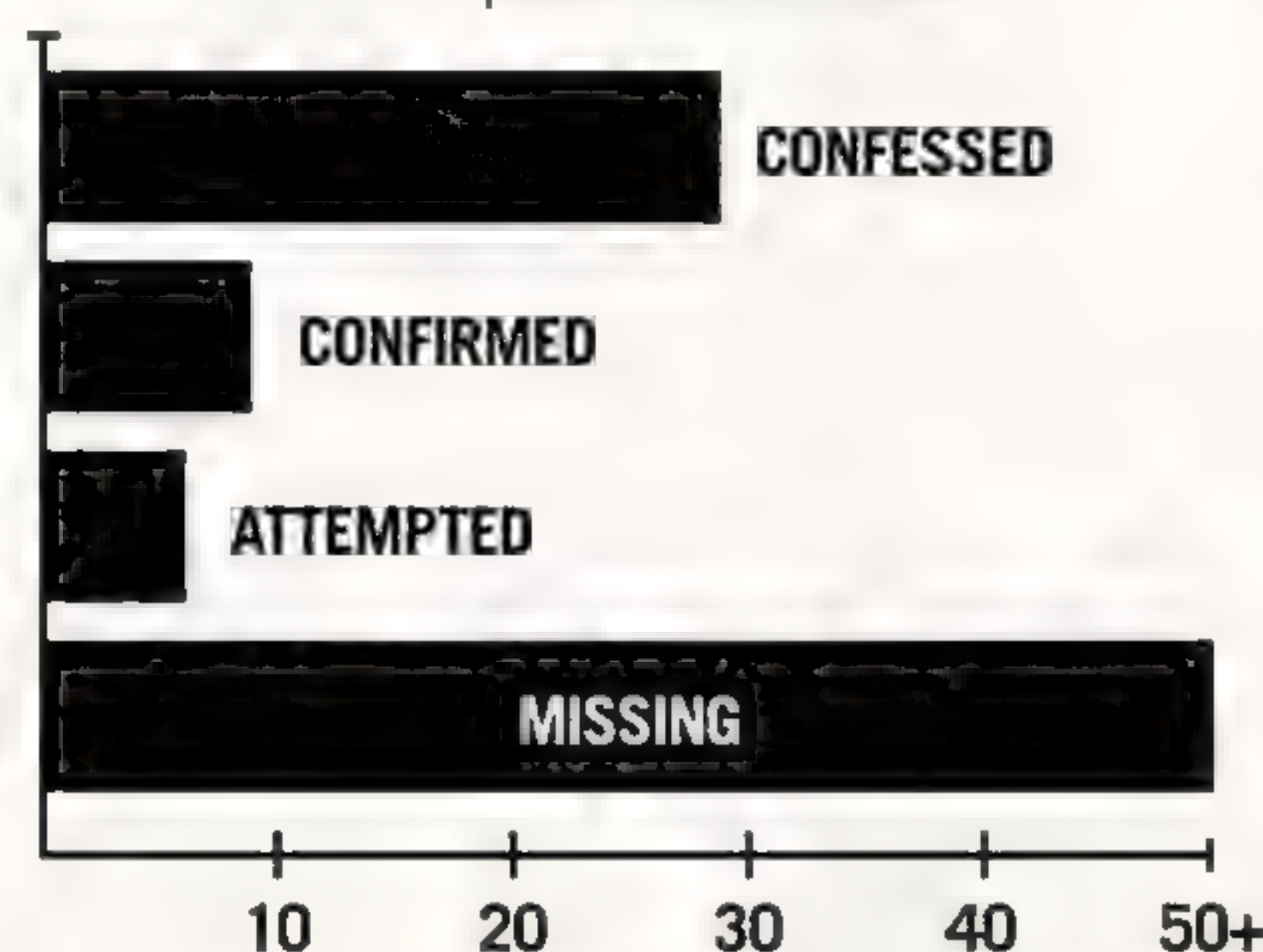
## \$12,000

He once faked his death with a \$20,000 life insurance policy, and Holmes made thousands more dollars using corpses in fraudulent claims, making himself the sole beneficiary. Holmes convinced Benjamin Pietzel to insure himself for \$12,000 (over \$350,000 today), before killing him.



## 250

Holmes committed as many as 200-250 murders, mainly for money. Others were of accomplices and lovers he thought might know too much and some, undoubtedly, were purely out of a passion for murder.



## JUNE 1882

Holmes enrolled at the University of Michigan, studying medicine on this date. He began his evil insurance racket soon after.

## 3 WIVES



Having married Clara Lovering and abandoned her for Myrta Bellknap, Holmes bigamously married Georgiana Yoke in Denver, Colorado. He then had three wives at the same time.

## 4 STAIRCASES

Some of the Murder Castle's stairs led into blind alleys without exits, to confuse residents and victims.

## 12+ SECRET PRISONS

At least 12 guest rooms, probably more, could only be opened from outside. Once you went in, you didn't come out. Not alive, anyway.

## 12+ ILLEGAL ABORTIONS

Holmes performed many of these, disposing of any who died during the procedure. Dozens, and possibly hundreds of women used his services.

## 1 OF A KIND

The 'Murder Castle' is unique in American crime. Holmes is the only American serial killer to have been so elaborate.

## 3 PRIOR MURDERS

He was suspected of murders long before arriving in Chicago. At least three were suspected, though never proven.

## 4 STATES, 2 COUNTRIES

Holmes travelled. His crimes encompassed Texas, Illinois, New York and New Hampshire. He also killed three victims in Toronto, Canada.



# THE WEREWOLFF OF WISTERIA

ALBERT FISH WAS NOT THE MEEK MAN HE APPEARED, BUT A VILE CHILD MOLESTER  
AND SADISTIC CANNIBAL MURDERER WHO KNEW NO BOUNDS

WORDS TANITA MATTHEWS





Serial killer, cannibal and rapist Albert Fish boasted that he "had children in every state"

**E**ven 90 years after his death, the name Albert Fish sends a violent wave of fear and horror through the hearts of children and adults. The Werewolf of Wisteria, The Gray Man, The Brooklyn Vampire, The Boogeyman – Fish acquired all these names as he swept children off the street, out of their homes and then subjected them to the most extreme and violent acts of sadomasochism. He tortured their tiny bodies and killed them before roasting their “sweet little” buttocks in the oven, devouring them for days on end. Fish bragged that he had “children in every state” across the USA. He claimed to have, in one-way or another, attacked at least 100 children. But his most sensational murder was that of sweet, angelic ten-year-old Grace Budd, who he took right from under her parents’ nose.

The notorious killer was born Hamilton Howard Fish in 1870 in Washington, DC. His father, Randall, 43 years his mother’s senior, died when he was five years old, forcing his mother to place him in St John’s Orphanage while she searched for a job that allowed her to care for Fish entirely. Fish admitted: “That’s where I got started wrong.” He

learned to enjoy the pain inflicted upon himself and other boys from the beatings they received. Nicknamed Ham-and-Eggs by the other boys, he changed his name to Albert to avoid being teased. His mother found herself a job working for the government when Fish was nine, so she returned and brought him home.

At the age of 12, Fish started his first homosexual relationship with a telegraph boy, which opened his eyes to a number of sexually deviant practices including the consumption of faeces (coprophagia) and urine (undinism) and voyeurism. Before he married at the age of 28 and went on to father his six children, he had indulged in male prostitution, molesting young boys and visiting bathhouses and brothels. His marriage to a woman nine years his junior was arranged by his mother and lasted 14 years. In 1917, his wife left him for the man who had boarded in their house. She took everything and left Fish with six children to care for – the youngest was three years old.

Around this time, Fish claimed he started hearing voices from God telling him to torture children. Mental health





**ABOVE** More than 50 fingers, legs and other bones were found by detectives near the house where Albert Fish murdered Grace Budd

issues were a common theme in the Fish family: his uncle suffered from mania, his brother was confined to a mental hospital, his sister was diagnosed with a “mental affliction” and his mother had auditory and visual hallucinations.

## EASY PREY

After his marriage fell apart, Fish continued with his perversions. He made his living as a painter and decorator, and therefore moved around a lot. Many a time he moved on because it was discovered that he was unusually friendly towards the children in the house or neighbourhood. Fish particularly preyed on African-American children or the mentally handicapped, as he felt these would be the victims people would be least concerned about.

On 25 May 1928, he responded to a classified advertisement he had seen in the newspaper. It read: “Young man, 18, wishes position in country. Edward Budd, 406 West 15th Street.” Three days later, Fish stood on the doorstep of the Budd family home in West Chelsea and introduced himself as ‘Frank Howard’, a farmer from Farmingdale, New York. He told Delia Budd that he wanted to hire her son and his friend Willie, and would send for them in a few days. Fish actually planned to tie Edward up, mutilate him and watch him bleed to death. He failed to show up a few days later to collect the boys, but sent a telegram to apologise and suggest an alternative date for his arrival. He arrived bearing gifts of pot cheese and strawberries ‘from his farm’. The family invited him to sit down for some lunch with them, where Fish behaved like doting grandparent to the Budd family.

As they sat and talked of the farm ‘Frank Howard’ had reared on his own after his wife left him and his six children, in came the Budds’ daughter Grace, dressed in her Sunday

best. She was a vision in a white cotton dress with white stockings and a string of white pearlescent beads around her neck. Fish was infatuated with the little girl and changed his mind about his intended victim.

He told her parents that he was on his way to his niece’s birthday party at his married sister’s house on Columbus and 137th Street. His niece was their daughter’s age, he told them, and he asked would Grace like to attend it with him? Mr and Mrs Budd hardly left their own neighbourhood and were unfamiliar with the location, so Delia was not so sure, but her husband interjected. “She doesn’t see much good times anyway. Let her go. She’s always cooped up in this dark cellar,” he told his wife. So they agreed to hand her over to the seemingly benevolent old man. Fish’s grandfatherly figure left the Budd household with Grace in his grasp very much alive, but not for much longer.

Fish had told Grace’s parents that he would bring her home by 9pm. When the pair failed to return by 11pm, the parents told themselves that maybe the party had over run and that they had decided to stay overnight. But by the next morning, there was still no sign of their daughter. Her father attempted to track down the address, only to discover that Columbus Street only went as far as 109th Street. Unsure of what to do next, he sent his son Edward to the nearest police station, where he was referred to the Missing Persons Bureau. Detectives dispatched a team to search for Grace.

Investigators attempted to track ‘Howard’ down via the Motor Vehicle Bureau, while another team set about tracing the telegram from the Western Union ‘Howard’ had sent to Edward about his visit. However, the sly killer had pocketed it from the Budds’ mantelpiece, claiming he wanted to complain to the Western Union that it had been misaddressed. Grace’s parents were shown mug shots of various child molesters and criminals but none of them resembled the old man who



**RIGHT** Six years after Grace's disappearance, Mrs Budd was sent a graphic and disturbing letter by Fish describing her daughter's fate. It read:



Fish believed that what he had done to his victims was "right" otherwise an angel from God would have stopped him. He was diagnosed with religious psychosis

came to tea. Everything Fish had told them was a lie. He was untraceable. The Budds would remain clueless as to their daughter's whereabouts for years.

## DEAD ENDS

The postal clerks at the Western Union searched through the tens of thousands of duplicated telegrams to find the one sent by 'Howard'. It took them 15 hours to find, but the only clue they could derive was that it had been sent from an office in East Harlem. Investigators considered searching every home in the area but realised its impossibility. They had another brainwave. The pot cheese and strawberries that 'Howard' had brought them could not have come from his fabricated farm. They tracked down the street peddler who had sold the old man the strawberries. He gave a description of the man but could not remember anything significant about him.

More than 1,000 flyers were printed and distributed by the Missing Persons Bureau, featuring the pretty girl, hoping that someone would see her face and offer a clue as to where she had gone. In June, the Budds received a letter signed by "JFH", who alleged that they had taken Grace and that she was safe and well, and not at all home sick. She had been given a pet cat and a pet canary called Bill. The author of the note claimed they would make arrangements in the near future so that Grace could visit. Some officers believed the letter to be authentic, while others were sceptical. The case went cold and before long the daily coverage in the newspapers of Grace's kidnapping died away.

A prison warden in Florida received one of the flyers. The description of 'Howard' reminded him of a man named Albert Corthell who had served four years in prison in 1922 for embezzlement. The more thought he gave it, the more he became convinced this was the man described in the flyer.

*My dear Mrs Budd •*

*In 1894 a friend of mine shipped as a deck hand on the steamer Tacoma, Capt John Davis. They sailed from San Francisco to Hong Kong China. On arriving there he and two others went ashore and got drunk. When they returned the boat was gone. At that time there was a famine in China. Meat of any kind was from \$1 to 3 Dollars a pound. So great was the suffering among the very poor that all children under 12 were sold to the Butchers to be cut up and sold for food in order to keep others from starving. A boy or girl under 14 was not safe in the street. You could go in any shop and ask for steak - chops - or stew meat. Part of the naked body of a boy or girl would be brought out and just what you wanted cut from it. A boy or girls behind which is the sweetest part of the body and sold as veal cutlet brought the highest price. John staid there so long he acquired a taste for human flesh. On his return to N.Y. he stole two boys one 7 one 11. Took them to his home stripped them naked tied them in a closet then burned everything they had on. Several times every day and night he spanked them - tortured them - to make their meat good and tender. First he killed the 11 yr old boy, because he had the fattest ass and of course the most meat on it. Every part of his body was cooked and eaten except Head - bones and guts. He was Roasted in the oven, (all of his ass) boiled, broiled, fried, stewed. The little boy was next, went the same way. At that time I was living at 409 E 100 St, rear - right side. He told me so often how good Human flesh was I made up my mind to taste it. On Sunday June the 3 - 1928 I called on you at 406 W 15 St. Brought you pot cheese - strawberries. We had lunch. Grace sat in my lap and kissed me. I made up my mind to eat her, on the pretense of taking her to a party. You said Yes she could go. I took her to an empty house in Westchester I had already picked out. When we got there, I told her to remain outside. She picked wild flowers. I went upstairs and stripped all my clothes off. I knew if I did not I would get her blood on them. When all was ready I went to the window and called her. Then I hid in a closet until she was in the room. When she saw me all naked she began to cry and tried to run down stairs. I grabbed her and she said she would tell her mama. First I stripped her naked. How she did kick - bite and scratch. I choked her to death then cut her in small pieces so I could take my meat to my rooms, cook and eat it. How sweet and tender her little ass was roasted in the oven. It took me 9 days to eat her entire body. I did not fuck her tho I could of had I wished. She died a virgin.*



Grace Budd was the last known victim of Albert Fish although police suspected that there might have been a number of other victims that he targeted



# PIQUERISM

AFTER HIS ARREST, FISH WAS EXAMINED. X-RAYS REVEALED ALMOST 30 NEEDLES EMBEDDED IN HIS GROIN

"I always had a desire to inflict pain on others and to have others inflict pain on me. I always seemed to enjoy everything that hurt." Fish's desire for pain began at a young age, something that is not uncommon according to Neel Burton MD of *Psychology Today*: "It seems that men with sadistic urges tend to develop them at an earlier age." As Fish grew older, his sadomasochistic tendencies developed. He enjoyed inserting pins into his groin and pulling them out. His children even recalled finding needles in his books, unaware of what their purpose was. Sometimes, when Fish would insert a needle into his groin, he would find it impossible to retract. When

he was X-rayed following his arrest, it was clear that some of the needles were close to vital organs and had begun to erode having been there for so long. Burton also pays attention to the renowned Sigmund Freud and his theories. "Freud remarked that the tendency to inflict and receive pain during intercourse is 'the most common and important of all perversions,' and ascribed it – as so much else – to the incomplete or aberrant psychological development in early childhood. Fish himself always admitted that his time in St John's Orphanage is what started him on his destructive path of sadomasochism, which led to the development of his perversions."



He took his picture out of the prison files and examined it. Corthell was a conman, but was he capable of kidnapping a child? The prison warden sent his photograph to the New York Police Commissioner Joseph Warren. The department had received hundreds of 'leads' in the last few months, some of them legitimate, but not all. However, they explored every avenue in determination to find the missing child.

William Vetter, an assistant superintendent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Brooklyn, told investigators that just days before Grace was taken, a man who matched the description of 'Howard' had approached him, interested in adopting a six-year-old girl. Suspicious of the old man, he set up a second interview with him but he failed to return. Police invited Vetter to the station to look over the photographs they had of possible suspects. Vetter picked out the conman's photograph sent over by the warden.

When police showed the picture to Grace's parents, her father couldn't be quite sure, nor could her brother Edward. But her mother recognised him straight away. Months later, police received a reliable tip off that the man they were

hunting was in Ohio. Investigators were dispatched to the Midwest but failed to retrieve the alleged kidnapper. Two years passed and still Grace was no closer to being returned to the loving arms of her worried family.

Detectives still sought out Corthell, but on 3 September 1930, a woman named Jessie Pope walked into West 20th Street Station and announced to the station sergeant that her estranged husband, Charles Pope, was involved in the kidnapping of Grace. Mrs Pope alleged that a couple of years ago, while she and her husband were estranged, she received a message from him telling her to meet him on the corner of High and Smith Streets. When she arrived, he had in his company a little girl with short brown hair and dressed in her Sunday clothes. She was asked to look after her while Pope went away on business, but he declined to elaborate further what sort of business or who the little girl belonged to.

Her rejection of his request caused the pair to argue, and Mr Pope had turned on his heel and headed towards the ferry with the little girl. Asked why she had not reported this sooner, Mrs Pope said she had fallen seriously ill. When she recovered, the saga had died down and she had forgotten about the incident. It was only when she saw the newspapers report on Grace's kidnapper being identified as a Mr Corthell that she was wracked with guilt and decided to speak out.

Charles Pope was arrested the next day at the apartment he shared with his widowed sister. Witnesses including Grace's mother positively identified Pope. The 66-year-old man was kept in custody for more than three months, awaiting trial. His bail was set at \$25,000. For as much as Pope protested his innocence, his wife told the media that he was a dangerous man who had been held in a mental institution for several months. There was a substantial amount of circumstantial evidence surrounding Pope, but after a while the investigators on the case began to question whether he was really the man they were after. At his trial he was found not guilty, and it was discovered that the tale had been a vindictive ploy from his ex-wife. On top of this, it was proven that Corthell was also innocent. The police had lost both prime suspects and again the case went cold.

While the Missing Persons Bureau investigated and tied up the loose ends with Corthell and Pope, another grey-haired man was arrested for sending obscene material, namely letters, through the mail to women he had selected from various advertisements in newspapers. It was Fish, who was claiming to be a Hollywood movie producer in his sordid letters to candid ladies. *Deranged*, a book about Fish's life by Harold Schechter, makes reference to one of the obscene letters Fish sent to a housekeeper in New York he had found in the 'situations wanted' ads. "Tell me when you want to do number 2. I will take you over my knees, pull up your clothes, take down your drawers and hold my mouth to your sweet honey fat ass and eat your sweet peanut butter as it comes out fresh and hot. That is how they do it in Hollywood," he wrote. It was ordered by the judge that Fish be observed for ten days in Bellevue hospital. He was there for almost 30 days in total before he was released to the care of his daughter.

## TAKING THE BAIT

A seemingly polite old man who was co-operative with hospital staff, Fish was harbouring a dark, demonic secret fuelled by his sexual desire for children. In 1924, Fish lured Francis McDonnell away from playing football with his friends in Long Island. His body was discovered under branches in a nearby woodland, stripped, beaten and



# IMPLEMENTS OF HELL

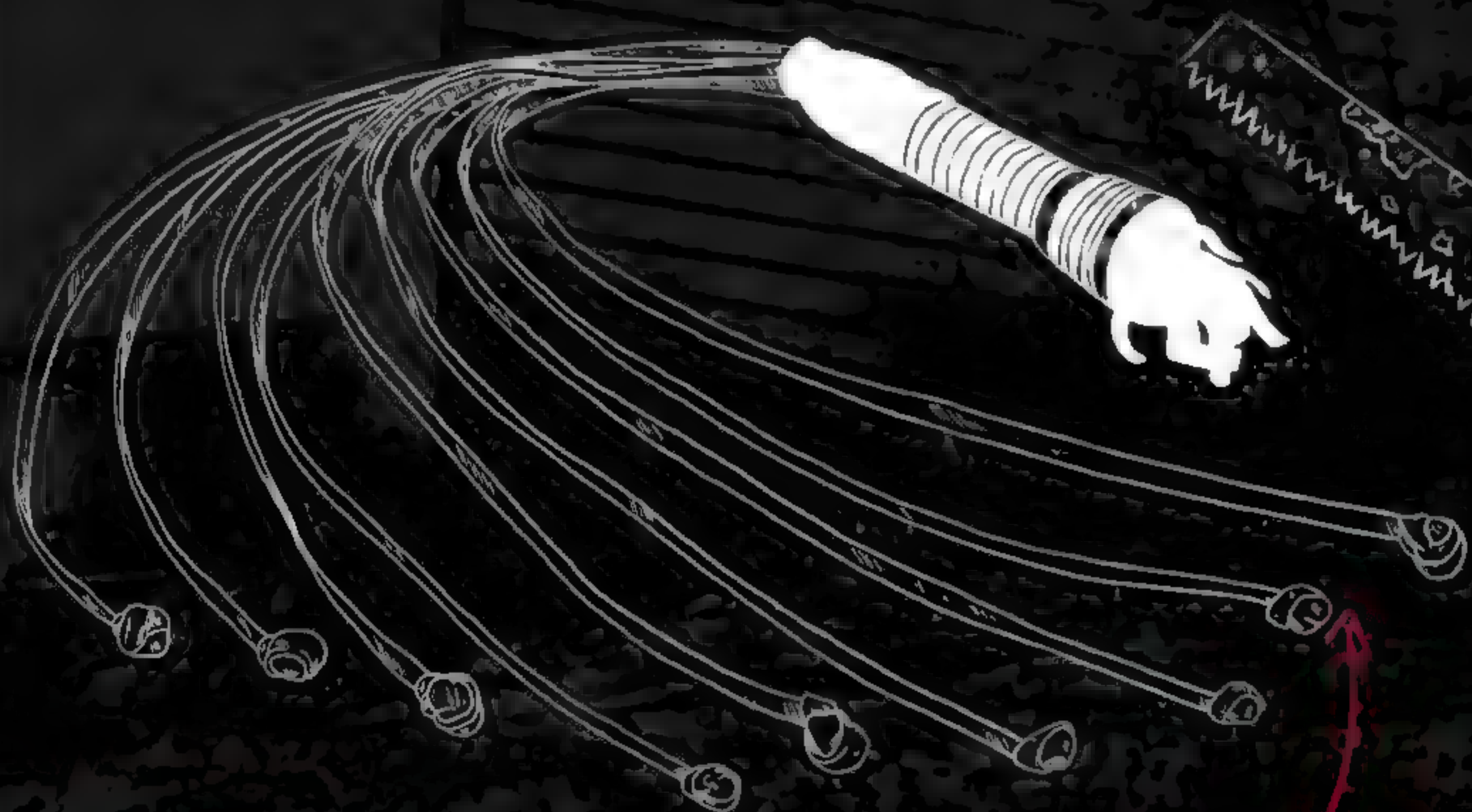
THE CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS, MEAT CLEAVER, KNIFE, HANDSAW AND A NAIL-STUDED PADDLE WERE FISH'S TOOLS FOR CARRYING OUT HIS SADISTIC IMPULSES

Fish tortured, mutilated and murdered the young children he selected as his victims with his 'implements of hell'. In one instance, Fish attempted to test his tools on a child he had been molesting named Cyril Quinn. When Quinn and his friends were playing football on a sidewalk, Fish invited them into his apartment for sandwiches. While the two boys were wrestling on Fish's bed, they dislodged his mattress. Underneath it they found Fish's 'implements' and fled the apartment. When he abducted Grace Budd, he boarded a train and headed for Wisteria Cottage. As he stepped off the train and opened his arms for Grace to jump into, she stopped and returned to fetch the parcel of tools Fish had left in his seat. She handed the old man the tools that, like many before her, would aid and abet her grisly death and mutilation. Fish later admitted had she not handed over the tools, he would have spared her life.



## NAIL-STUDED PADDLE

Fish crafted his own instrument, which was a paddle with 3.5-centimetre-long nails embedded into it. On more than one occasion, his children recalled how he would spank himself with the nailed paddle until he bled. He also encouraged his own children and their friends in the neighbourhood to spank him with the paddle until he bled.

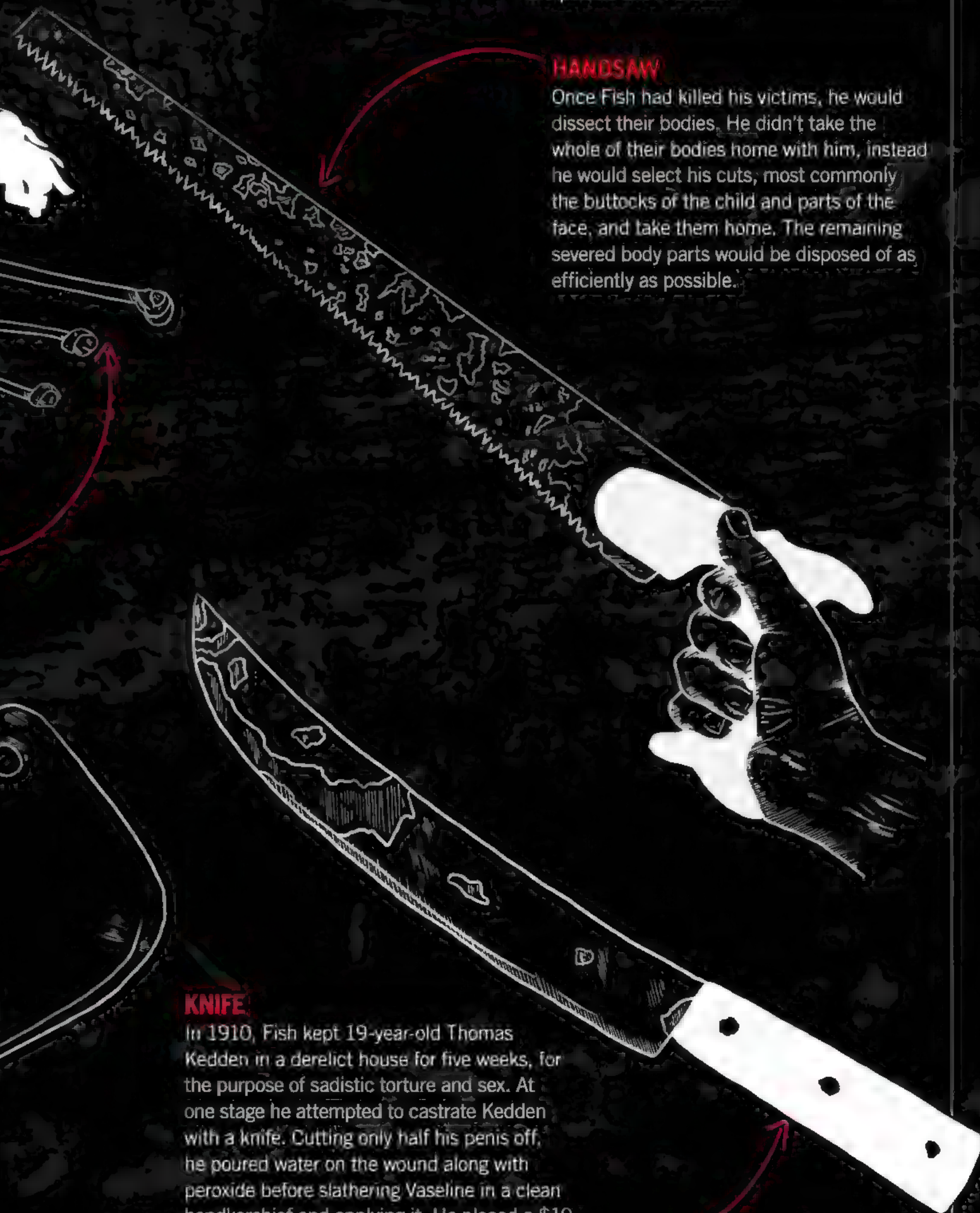
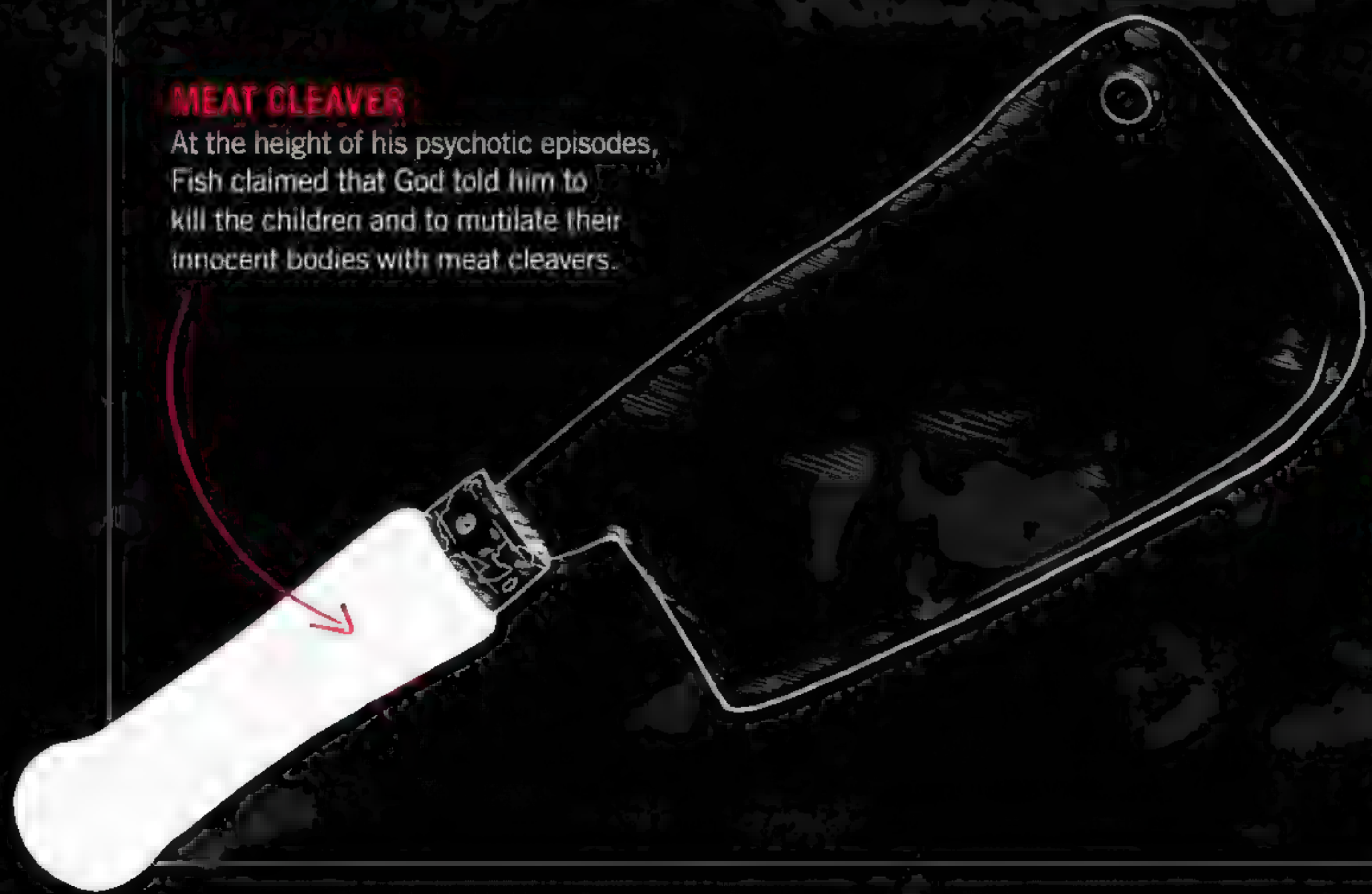


## CAT-O'-NINE TAILS

Fish used a homemade device known as a cat-o'-nine-tails. Fish particularly liked to be spanked and whipped, and also liked to inflict this on others. The device was made from one of his belts that was cut in half and then slit into six strips approximately eight inches long. It was this device that he used on four-year-old Billy Gaffney in 1927.

## MEAT CLEAVER

At the height of his psychotic episodes, Fish claimed that God told him to kill the children and to mutilate their innocent bodies with meat cleavers.



## HANDSAW

Once Fish had killed his victims, he would dissect their bodies. He didn't take the whole of their bodies home with him, instead he would select his cuts, most commonly the buttocks of the child and parts of the face, and take them home. The remaining severed body parts would be disposed of as efficiently as possible.

## KNIFE

In 1910, Fish kept 19-year-old Thomas Kedden in a derelict house for five weeks, for the purpose of sadistic torture and sex. At one stage he attempted to castrate Kedden with a knife. Cutting only half his penis off, he poured water on the wound along with peroxide before slathering Vaseline in a clean handkerchief and applying it. He placed a \$10 bill in the boy's pocket before he left.





**ABOVE** Detectives searched Wisteria Cottage with a metal detector, hoping to find the kitchen knife that Fish had used in the murder of Grace Budd. However, the instrument was never found.

strangled with his suspenders. There was also evidence he had been sexually assaulted. His mother described seeing a strange man earlier in the day hanging around the area. “Everything about him seemed faded and grey,” she said. Police were unsure whether a geriatric could have mustered the strength to kill a young boy. Regardless, they investigated the murder extensively, but never found the ‘Grey Man’.

Over in Brooklyn three years later, four-year-old Billy Gaffney was playing outside with his neighbour Billy Beaton and 12-year-old Johnny McNiff. Without warning, the two Billys simply vanished. Beaton’s father eventually found his son on the roof of a nearby building. When he asked him where his friend had gone, a frightened Billy replied: “The Boogeyman took him.” The police fruitlessly searched neighbour’s buildings and factories. They suspected he may have fallen into the canal five blocks from their home, and dredged it to search for a body. When the search for the young boy proved unsuccessful, Billy was asked to describe ‘the Boogeyman’. He told them he was a slender old man with grey hair and a grey moustache.

Fish later told his attorney of Gaffney’s fate. He claimed he had taken the boy to a lone house in Riker Avenue near to the dumps. Using tools such as a heavy homemade cat-o’-nine-tails, he whipped the naked toddler’s behind until blood cascaded down his legs. He cut off the boy’s ears and nose, and slit his mouth from ear to ear. By the time Fish had finished gouging Gaffney’s eyes out, the young boy had succumbed to the pain and was dead. Fish butchered the child, tossing the undesired pounds of flesh into the waste,

savouring a select few parts. At home he claimed to have made a stew from the ears, nose and pieces of belly along with onions, carrots and turnips. “It was good,” he said. In his oven, he claimed to have roasted Gaffney’s buttocks, which had been split open and stuffed with bacon, basting the behind at frequent intervals with a wooden spoon. The boy’s genitals had also been cut away to be devoured. Fish said that he could not chew the child’s testicles, but his penis was “sweet as a nut,” and that he had consumed Gaffney over a four-day period.

## A GRUESOME CONFESSION

Since Grace Budd’s murder, Fish had been in police custody half a dozen times on various charges, from petty theft to sending obscene letters. Each time he left the station undetected while detectives continued their hunt for Grace’s abductor. Six years went by with little news as to what happened to the young girl. In 1934, her mother received a letter. Functionally illiterate, she handed it to Edward who read it aloud, unaware of what he was about to say.

The letter was a vile and grotesque confession as to what had happened to their daughter. She had been taken, murdered and her body roasted for consumption by a cannibalistic monster. The letter was taken to the investigative team. While nobody wanted to believe it was true, and that it was just a perverted lunatic playing games, the author had included striking detail in regards to Howard’s visit. The handwriting was also identical to that of the



telegram the old man had sent via the Western Union. The envelope contained another clue – a hexagonal emblem with the letters NYPCBA, which stood for the New York Private Chauffeur's Benevolent Association.

An emergency meeting of members of the association was scheduled under police instructions. Handwriting on membership forms was compared in order to find one identical to 'Howard'. Members were then asked to report anybody who may have taken the association's stationery. A janitor came forward and admitted to taking sheets of paper and envelopes. He had left them in his old rooming house at 200 East 52nd Street in room number seven. The landlady of the building was questioned about the occupier of that room. She thought the description of Grace's abductor sounded exactly like the man who had been living there for two months, Albert H Fish. However, the detectives were too late, as he had checked out days ago, but had said he would be back to collect a letter he was expecting from his son.

Detectives received a call on 13 December 1934 from the landlady. Fish was back and looking for the letter. Police burst into the rooming house to find the elusive child murderer. They encountered a frail and slight man with a teacup in his hand who looked no more harmful than any other doting grandparent. When asked if he was Albert Fish, the old man rose to his feet and nodded. In a flash he produced a razor blade and held it out in front of him. An officer wrestled the weapon away and twisted the old man's hand tightly in his grasp triumphantly.

## DEATH OF A MONSTER

Fish confessed to everything, telling the police that in 1928 he had been overcome by a 'blood thirst' and an uncontrollable desire to kill. After he left the Budd's house, he had taken a train to the village of Worthington in Westchester and made his way to Wisteria Cottage with Grace in tow. He told the little girl to play outside while he completed some chores. Inside he stripped off his clothes and then called the little girl in, hiding in a closet. When she arrived with a bouquet of flowers in her hand for the old man, he emerged from the closet naked, which had made her cry.

She tried to run away, but Fish was too quick. He grabbed her by the throat, carried her into the room and laid her on the floor. He placed his knee on her chest and strangled the little girl. It took less than five minutes, and in the process he had two involuntary ejaculations. He propped her body over a paint can and decapitated her with a meat cleaver, bringing the weapon down as hard as he could. He told the police that as soon as he had done it, he was overcome with sorrow. "I would have given my life within a half-hour after I done it to restore it to her," he told them. Nevertheless, he cut up her body up so it was easier to manage, taking the parts he desired most to eat and chucking the rest over the cottage wall a few days later.

Irrespective of the arguments brought forward by the defence that Fish be considered insane, a jury decided otherwise and he was sentenced to death by electric chair for his crimes. For his last meals he ate a T-bone steak (with the bone removed out of concerns over self-harm) and chicken, although he only managed a few mouthfuls. He calmly walked towards the death chamber and aided the staff in strapping him into the chair. He was indifferent to death. He was pronounced dead after three minutes of being in the electric chair, and was the oldest person to be executed in the infamous Sing Sing prison at the age of 64.

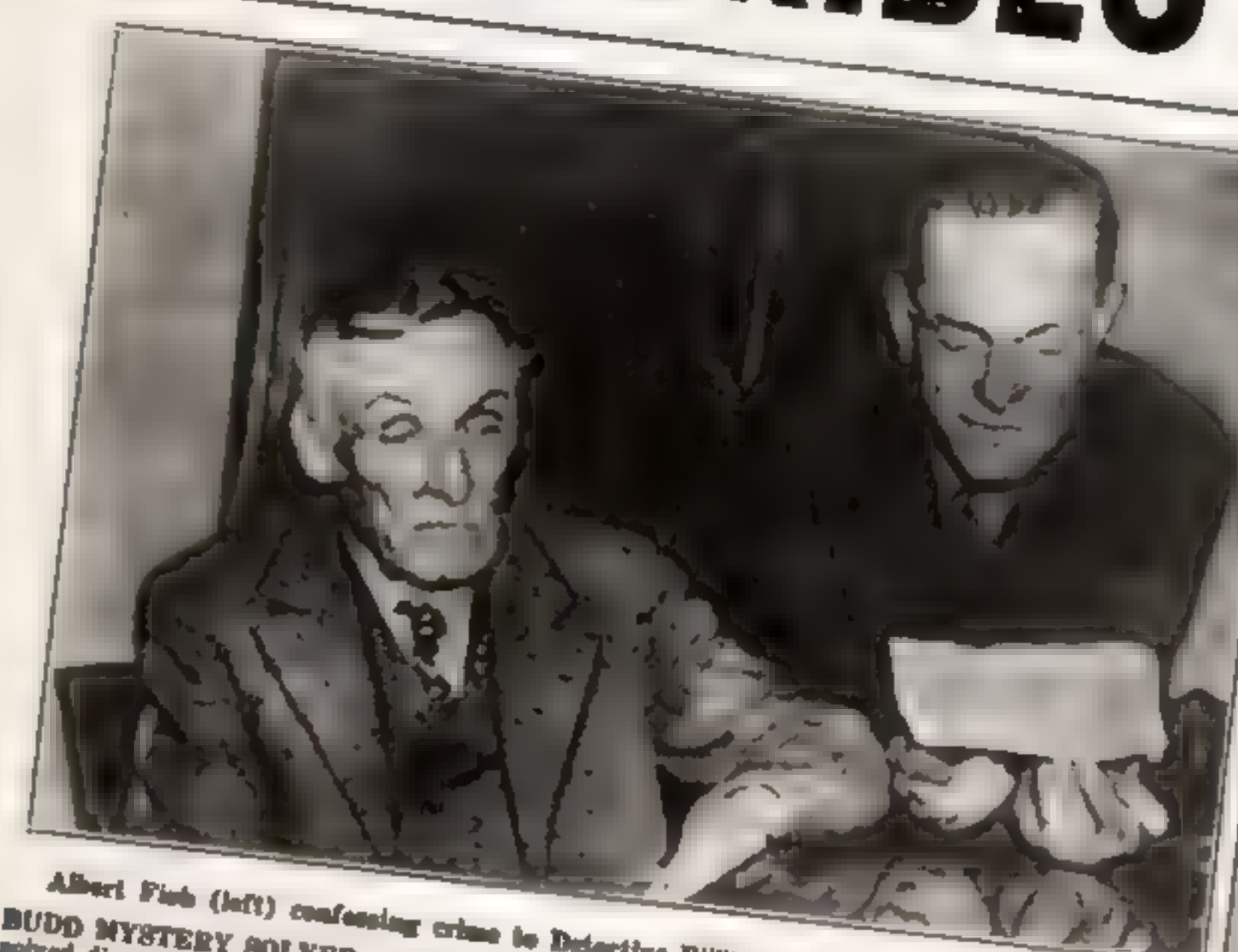


**ABOVE** The trial of Albert Fish began on 11 March 1935 in White Plains, New York. Fish stood accused of the premeditated murder of Grace Budd in 1928

## DAILY NEWS NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER New York, Friday, December 14, 1934 Vol. 16, No. 147 80 Pages 8 Cents \*\*\*\*\* FINAL

# GRACE BUDD'S KILLER DESCRIBES MURDER

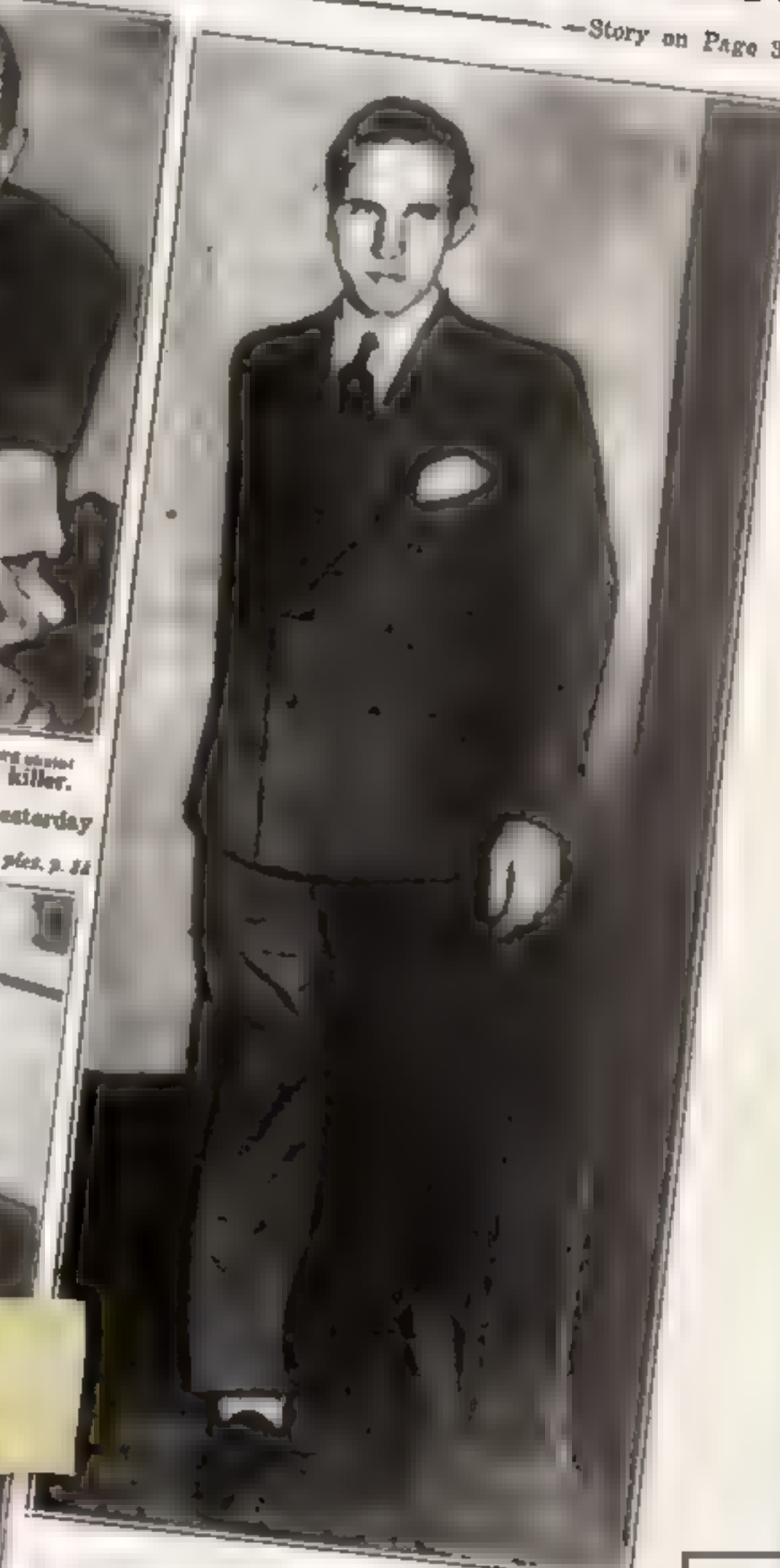
—Story on Page 3



Albert Fish (left) confessing crime to Detective William King, who tracked down killer.  
**BUDD MYSTERY SOLVED.**—With arrest of elderly Albert H. Fish, painter, police yesterday solved disappearance of Grace Budd six years ago. He confessed slaying child.  
—Story p. 3; other pgs. p. 24



Their six-year hell of uncertainty ended with the sorrowful revelation that their daughter was definitely dead, parents of Grace Budd were tragic figures last night. Above, Mrs. Delia Budd, with daughter, Beatrice, identifies Fish from The News picture.



**STATE MUST TELL HIM.**—State of New Jersey must tell Bruno Hauptmann exactly how it concluded he murdered the Lindbergh baby, it was ruled yesterday by Supreme Court Justice Traynor. Above, Hauptmann on his way to courtroom for hearing at Flemington, N. J.—Story p. 6.

Alongside the horrific letter Fish sent to Mrs Budd, he also confessed in six separate confessions, each of which he signed to fortify their legitimacy



DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS

# THE BUTCHER OF PLAINFIELD

WHAT WAS THE WATERSHED MOMENT THAT MADE WEIRD ED GEIN GO FROM A 50S WISCONSIN FARMER WHO KEPT HIS OWN BUSINESS, TO A GRAVE-DIGGING MURDERER WHO TURNED HUMAN CARCASSES INTO HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS?

WORDS PAUL DONNELLEY





To the outside world, the Geins appeared like any other turn of the century family in Plainfield, Wisconsin, or indeed a family from almost any era anywhere in the Western world. Since only Ed achieved any measure of infamy, it is difficult to recount much of the family's life, save that which appears in public records.

There have been numerous unconfirmed reports of goings-on in the Gein household, and you must be wary of sensationalist reportage when it comes to a case like that this.

His father, George Gein (it has a long 'e' as in fiend and does not rhyme with swine), was born on 4 August 1873. George was little more than a toddler and living in Coon Valley, Wisconsin, when his mother, father and elder sister set off into town to do some errands. He never saw them again. A flash flood sprang up and washed them all to their deaths. Young George was then raised by his grandparents and, after leaving school, he became an apprentice to a blacksmith. He saw more for himself than shoeing horses, though, and so, when he was 20, George upped sticks and left for the big city. He drifted from job to job, staying in each employment for only a brief period and usually finding solace in the bottle.

Augusta Wilhelmine Lehrke, five years younger than her future husband, was born on 21 July 1878, part of a large, deeply religious family of German immigrants. As she grew up Augusta, became horrified by what she saw as the moral laxness of the world around her. She was judgmental, critical and unbending. Added to her less than aesthetically pleasing appearance, it would be fair to say that Augusta's dance card was not exactly full.

What she saw in George Gein or, indeed, what he saw in her can never be known. Perhaps the fact that both were practicing Lutherans – she more devout than him – was enough to bind them together. Perhaps it was a need for companionship. Whatever the case, they married on 4 December 1899. The union produced two sons, but it could never be regarded as a happy one.

The couple's first son was born on 17 January 1901, and they named him Henry George. A long five years and seven months later, in August 1906, their second, Edward Theodore, arrived.

Augusta had hoped that her second child would be a girl; by this time, she strongly despised most men, and this point of view was not helped by George's handiness with his fists. The two boys looked on helplessly when – in his cups – George beat his wife. She would accept the beatings in silence but afterwards would get down on her knees and pray for God to smite her feckless husband.

In 1909, George bought a meat and groceries shop at 914 Caledonia Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin, but it was soon Augusta who took charge. The 1909 city directory listed George as the store's owner; two

**LEFT** Even at the moment of his arrest, Ed Gein appears as placid and genial as anyone in Plainfield had ever recalled him – almost as if he was oblivious, or perhaps wholly accepting, of his fate. His methods and habits were gruesome, for sure, and if he hadn't been apprehended, who knows what, or who, else would have ended up in his squalid 'workshop'





**ABOVE** Bernice Worden was the final (known) victim of Gein. It's quite possible that he had succumbed to the same 'daze' that compelled him to rob graves when he killed the store owner

**RIGHT** Gein's visit to Worden's, where he shot Bernice through the neck, was certainly premeditated. The town was quiet and many of the men were out hunting



years later, Augusta was now the official proprietor and George a mere clerk.

At the back of the shop was a windowless outbuilding. The Gein boys were forbidden to go inside, an admonition that merely served to pique their curiosity. They saw animals going into the building and, on several occasions, heard squealing and yelping.

One day, Ed was by himself and had no idea where his parents were. He walked towards the outbuilding and noticed the door was slightly ajar. He edged towards it, his heart in his mouth. What he saw inside was to have a profound affect on him for the rest of his life.

Hanging upside down from a chain attached to the ceiling was a hog. His father was holding the animal still while his mother ran a knife down its belly, spilling its innards into a large metal bucket by her feet. Both Geins wore blood-spattered leather aprons. Ed must have let out a noise because his mother turned to him. He was never to forget the sight of her body covered in blood and slime.

## ODD ONE OUT

In late 1913, the Geins moved out of town and onto a dairy

farm near Camp Douglas, 40 miles east of La Crosse. Augusta feared the "moral depravity" of the locals would affect her beloved sons. At the farm, the Geins tended cows and grew rye but, for reasons known only to Augusta, she was not content, and the family were on the move again less than 12 months after they had arrived.

In 1914, the Geins uprooted to a 195-acre farm in Plainfield, known to locals as the old John Greenfield place after a previous owner. As had happened with the shop, the property was registered only in Augusta's name – an unusual occurrence for the time when men were normally the property owners. Once ensconced, they stayed in near splendid isolation for almost 26 years.

Plainfield had a population of about 700 people at the time the Geins arrived.

The boys only left the farm to go to school. Augusta discouraged them from making friends – local children nicknamed the younger boy 'Weird Ed', so he was never likely to win a school popularity contest – and instilled in them the belief that all women (her being the exception) were whores and to be avoided. Back at the farm, the young Geins were kept busy doing chores around the place.

Ed left school at 14 (some say 16) and began working full time on the farm. He had been an average pupil, neither excelling nor lagging behind his classmates. He enjoyed reading, a pastime that he maintained throughout his life, although his taste in literature eventually ended up being rather extreme. He could not mix easily like the other pupils seemed to, chatting about their lives, families and homes. He

**“IT WAS NEVER SUGGESTED BY ANYONE THAT ED GEIN MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH HIS BROTHER’S SUDDEN DEATH”**



# WHAT IS INSANITY?

WHO SAYS WHO'S MAD AND WHO'S NOT? REAL CRIME SPEAKS TO AN EXPERT ON 'SPECIAL VERDICTS'

## BIO PROFESSOR KEVIN KERRIGAN



Executive dean, Northumbria Law School, Northumbria University

Professor Kevin Kerrigan is dean of Northumbria Law School and a criminal and human rights solicitor. He teaches on the Law School's LLM in Mental Health Law.

### When was the precedent for criminal insanity set in law and what case was it?

The current definition of insanity dates back to the 1843 case of Daniel M'Naghten (known as the M'Naghten Rules). These arose from the controversial case when M'Naghten killed the prime minister's private secretary, Edward Drummond, in Whitehall while suffering from paranoid delusions.

### Could you define 'insanity', in legal terms to us?

The test is as follows: every defendant is presumed to be sane unless the contrary is proved [the same way they're innocent until proven guilty]. Insanity will arise if the court is satisfied that at the time of committing the act, the accused was "labouring under such a defect of reason, from disease of the mind, as not to know the nature and quality of the act he was doing; or, if he did know it, that he did not know he was doing what was wrong." If the jury accepts that the accused was insane at the time of the act, they will return a "special verdict" of 'Not Guilty by reason of Insanity' and the accused will be acquitted of the crime. However, he will not necessarily be free to leave the court.

### How do you safeguard against the accused pretending to be insane?

The judge will decide whether to leave a defence of insanity to the jury. Medical evidence from at least two doctors must be called and at least one of these must be an approved mental health specialist. Although the evidence

must be called, it is up to the judge and, if the defence is put to them, the jury, whether to accept the evidence. The psychiatrists will provide reports based on clinical examinations and will obviously be careful to consider the risk of false assertions of insanity.

### Is there a recent, famous case where the lines between insanity and sanity were blurred?

The Yorkshire Ripper case is often cited as an example where there was strong evidence of insanity or diminished responsibility (schizophrenia) but this was not accepted and the accused was convicted of murder.

### How do you think Ed Gein would be tried today? Was this as clear-cut a case of insanity as it sounds?

This was a US case that has slightly different rules [to the UK], but if his case was tried here now and if there was strong evidence that he suffered from schizophrenia that prevented him from knowing what he was doing or that it was wrong, then he could qualify as insane under the M'Naghten Rules. Obviously in relation to the charge of murder (but not the other offences) he would also have available the defence of diminished responsibility. In either case, if successful it would be almost inevitable that the judge would impose a hospital order with restriction order and he would only be released if he no longer suffered from the mental disorder or if he no longer posed a danger to the public. He would be held at a high-security mental hospital indefinitely.

watched them and tried to copy them, but always seemed to get his behaviour just that little bit wrong (much like the vengeful serial killer Dexter Morgan in the Showtime television series *Dexter*).

He would be caught staring just a bit too intently at a girl and she would feel uncomfortable. He would blush furiously if he heard the boys talking about sex and move out of earshot as quickly as he could. Young Ed was also quite effeminate in the way he spoke and also in his tendency to dissolve into tears at the slightest teasing.

There have been various stories about the way Augusta treated her sons and husband on the farm. One tale has her pouring boiling water on Ed's genitals when she caught him masturbating – but since all the participants are long dead, such tales cannot be verified.

Still drinking heavily, George Gein ranted at his sons and accused his wife of adultery, which was a preposterous suggestion for anyone who knew the slightest side of his wife's character. The alcohol affected George's brain as well as his body – he was an invalid by 1937. He died on 1 April 1940, aged 66. His obituary recorded, rather disingenuously:

"He was a good husband and father and will be missed by all those who knew him."

Augusta was now alone with her boys. The quiet and obedient Ed had certainly always been Augusta's favourite, and Henry Gein began to suspect that his brother's feelings for their mother were perhaps somewhat different to that of the love of a normal son. He couldn't have known how this would manifest, though.

## “ HE WAS ALONE IN A SCARY WORLD WHERE HE COULD NO LONGER RELY ON THE PROTECTION AND ADVICE OF HIS MOTHER ”

### WHO KILLED HENRY GEIN?

On 16 May 1944, there was a brush fire on the farm, and the two brothers set out to fight it. Some said the fire was started deliberately to burn off dry grass while others reported that its origins were accidental. However it started, this fire resulted directly or indirectly in Henry's death.

The brothers separated, believing that they could better control the conflagration from two angles. As the smoke billowed, Henry disappeared from view. The fire was eventually put out. Ed returned to the farmhouse alone and reported his brother missing.

Ed then led a search party straight to where his brother lay face down on the ground, even though supposedly he had not known where Henry was. Oddly, Gein's brother was on a patch of ground that had been burned by the flames but apart from some soot, his body and clothes had not been touched by the fire. Some accounts recounted that there was bruising on his head.

An inquest ruled that his death had been caused by smoke inhalation. It was never suggested by anyone, at least then, that Ed Gein might have had something to do with his brother's sudden death. The death was recorded as accidental



and no autopsy was performed.

Henry's death left Ed and Augusta together – they often shared a bed although it would seem unlikely that anything untoward occurred between mother and son. Perhaps it might have done had they been given more time together.

Not long after Henry's passing, Augusta suffered a stroke that left her seriously ill. Ed stayed by her hospital bed for as long as he was allowed, and when she was discharged, he looked after her devotedly. It was the first time that she had been reliant on him and he wanted to prove his worth to her, as well as possibly get a word or two of praise. They never came, though and by the middle of 1945, Augusta was back on her feet. Ed was pleased to have his mother back but beyond disappointed that she never acknowledged the care he had afforded her.

Towards the end of 1945, she suffered another stroke and was taken to Wild Rose Hospital, where she died a few days later on 29 December 1945 of a cerebral haemorrhage. She was 67. Ed wept hysterically at her funeral, which was held on New Year's Eve and attended by some of his aunts and uncles. He was alone in a scary world where he could no longer rely on the protection and advice of his mother, although he was financially secure because the government gave Gein a generous subsidy not to farm his fields, leaving them fallow.

Ed did not need a large farmhouse to himself, so he nailed shut his mother's bedroom door and the other areas in the farm that she most frequently used, leaving them exactly as they were when she died; they stayed that way for a dozen years. He lived in a small room next to the kitchen.

The story of Gein would become the inspiration for three cinematic monsters – Norman Bates in the various *Psycho* films, Leatherface in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and Buffalo Bill in *The Silence of the Lambs*. Unlike Norman Bates, Gein did not keep his mother's corpse – that only happened in Hollywood.

## ED IS ALL ALONE

Without any normal interests, Ed began collecting used chewing gum, a gas mask, breakfast cereal toys and false teeth. He took to reading the obituary pages of the local newspapers to see who had died.

He found a particular interest in middle-aged women who had died – they reminded him of his mother. Gein began to visit graveyards and cemeteries, where he would find freshly dug graves and exhume dead people, initially to study them, but he soon graduated to cutting off and keeping bits of their bodies, returning the parts he did not want to the coffin and reburying it. Gein later said that he did not have sex with any

**“ ED LET OUT A NOISE AND HIS MOTHER TURNED TO HIM. HE WAS NEVER TO FORGET THE SIGHT OF HER COVERED WITH BLOOD AND SLIME ”**

# GEIN'S GHOULISH COLLECTION

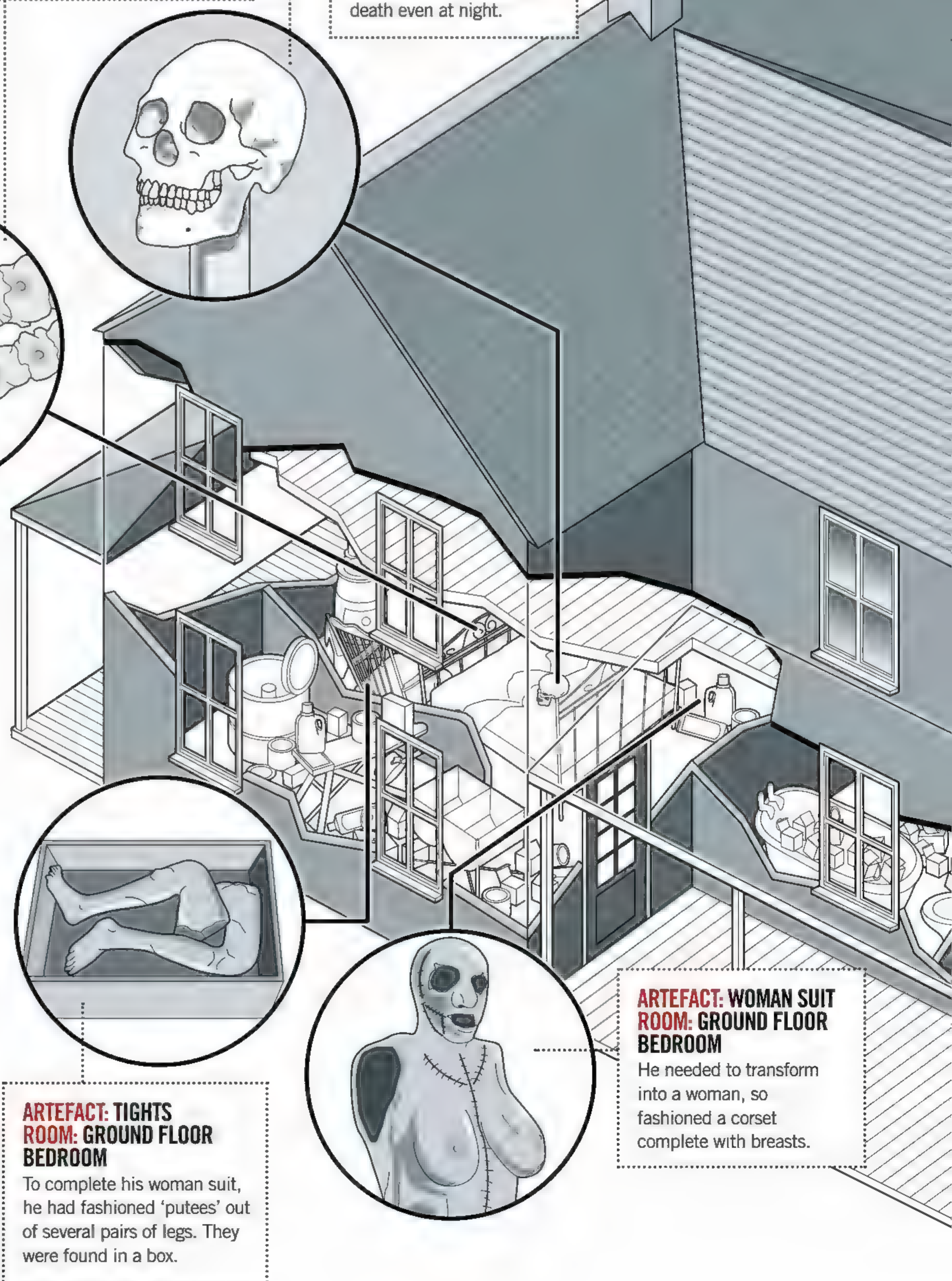
STRANGE MATERIAL ON THE LAMPSHADES, A WEIRD OBSESSION WITH MASKS AND, OF COURSE, THAT CORSET...

### ARTEFACT: NIPPLE BELT ROOM: GROUND FLOOR BEDROOM

The nipples can't have been a functional part of the belt – perhaps they were trophies to Gein?

### ARTEFACT: SKULL BED KNOB ROOM: GROUND FLOOR BEDROOM

These were found crowning his bed posts, as if Gein needed remind himself of death even at night.



### ARTEFACT: TIGHTS ROOM: GROUND FLOOR BEDROOM

To complete his woman suit, he had fashioned 'putees' out of several pairs of legs. They were found in a box.

### ARTEFACT: WOMAN SUIT ROOM: GROUND FLOOR BEDROOM

He needed to transform into a woman, so fashioned a corset complete with breasts.



When the police broke into Ed Gein's home, they found a collection of items that the Plainville farmer had fashioned from human body parts. Next to the kitchen sink was a bowl that Gein had used to eat his regular dinner of pork and beans. The bowl was jagged and uneven and did not sit properly. Closer inspection revealed that it was the

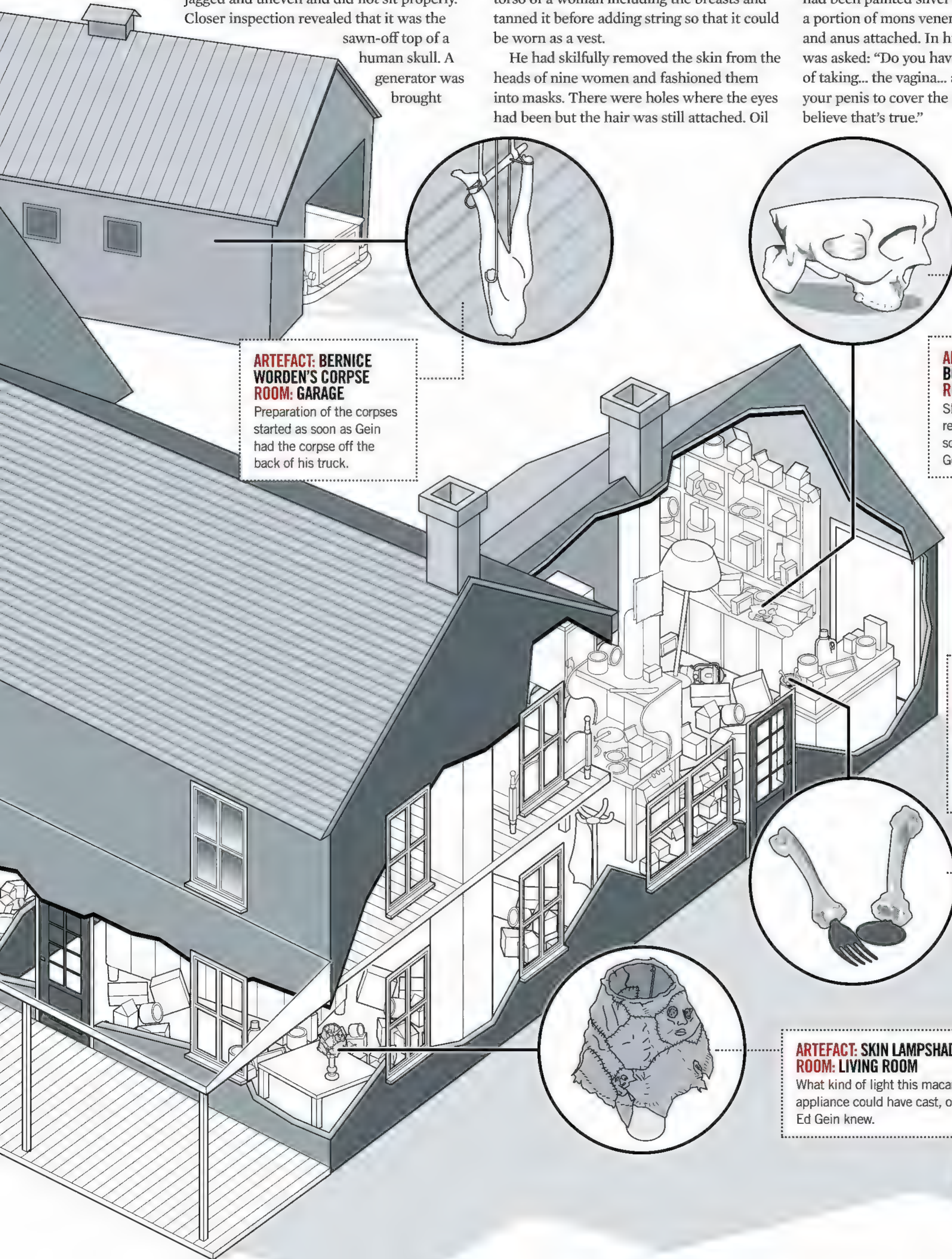
sawn-off top of a human skull. A generator was brought

to the property and for the first time it was lit properly. Some of the police may have wished to unsee what was illuminated. Gein had created several pairs of puttees (strips of material that cover the lower leg) out of human skin. He had carefully skinned the torso of a woman including the breasts and tanned it before adding string so that it could be worn as a vest.

He had skilfully removed the skin from the heads of nine women and fashioned them into masks. There were holes where the eyes had been but the hair was still attached. Oil

had been applied to some of the masks to keep the skin fresh. Some bore the lipstick of their owners.

Allan Wilimovsky, a crime laboratory scientist, found a shoebox and opened it. Inside was a collection of nine vulvas. One had been painted silver and another had a portion of mons veneris with the vagina and anus attached. In his interview, Gein was asked: "Do you have any recollection of taking... the vagina... and holding it over your penis to cover the penis?" He replied: "I believe that's true."



**ARTEFACT: BERNICE WORDEN'S CORPSE**  
**ROOM: GARAGE**

Preparation of the corpses started as soon as Gein had the corpse off the back of his truck.

**ARTEFACT: SKULL SOUP BOWLS**  
**ROOM: KITCHEN**

Skulls made for natural receptacles, replacing some cups and bowls in Gein's kitchen.

**ARTEFACT: KNUCKLEBONE CUTLERY**  
**ROOM: KITCHEN**

Gein wasted nothing, although how practical knucklebones could have been over wooden handles is anyone's guess.

**ARTEFACT: SKIN LAMPSHADE**  
**ROOM: LIVING ROOM**

What kind of light this macabre appliance could have cast, only Ed Gein knew.





**ABOVE** Ed Gein's bedroom was filthy, unkept... and more besides. Some of his more gruesome artefacts were found here, strewn about the room like the clothing of a lazy teenage boy

**CENTRE** While the top floor of the house was sealed off and pristine, the rooms Gein used descended into squalor. The authorities picked tentatively through the debris for Ed's handiwork

of the bodies he exhumed because "they smelled too bad." By December 1954, dead people no longer sated his lust and he turned his attentions to the living in his search for flesh.

Mary Hogan was a 54-year-old, large and buxom double divorcée who spoke with a thick German accent and ran Hogan's Tavern, a hostelry in Pine Grove, about seven miles from Plainville. According to some, she was in league with the Mob while others suggested that she was a former Chicago madam who had bought the pub with her ill-gotten gains. Whatever the truth, Hogan's was popular with the menfolk of Plainville, less so with their womenfolk, who distrusted Mary and the atmosphere she encouraged. To Ed Gein, she was the mirror image of his mother – they looked alike, but whereas his mother was pure and good, this Hogan slattern was dirty and evil.

On 8 December, Seymour Lester called at Hogan's Tavern for a drink and found it open but deserted. Looking around, he saw a pool of blood and a bullet casing on the floor, so raised the alarm. Mary Hogan was never seen alive again.

## **BIG GAME**

On 16 November 1957, the deer hunting season began and

**“ UNKNOWN TO HER, GEIN HAD TAKEN A BULLET FROM HIS POCKET AND PLACED IT INTO THE CHAMBER ”**

many of the townsmen went out to hunt for the food that would see them and their families through the bitter winter. By the close of the season, 40,000 deer and 13 hunters had lost their lives – two had suffered heart attacks, the remainder had been killed by 'friendly fire'.

Gein took the opportunity of the men's absence to go into town. He went to Worden's, a hardware shop owned by Bernice Worden, a 58-year-old widow and devout Methodist. He expressed an interest in a .22-calibre Marlin rifle and she passed it to him, then went to stare out of her shop window onto the main street. Unknown to her, Gein had taken a bullet from his pocket and placed it in the chamber. He aimed the gun at Mrs Worden and shot her in the back of the head. He then loaded her body into her own truck and drove off to his farmhouse.

Mrs Worden's son, Frank, who in his career worked as a policeman and fireman as well as helping out in the store, returned from his hunt to find the shop shut. Entering, he found blood on the floor but no sign of his mother. When he asked around, he learned that Gein had been in the shop often and the previous day had asked for a gallon of anti-freeze. Frank found a receipt for anti-freeze on the shop counter. It was enough evidence for him, and he called the police. The 32-year-old Sheriff Arthur Schley and Captain Lloyd Schoephoerster paid a visit to the Gein homestead.

Ed Gein was not at home – he was having dinner with friends – so the police entered the house by the rear woodshed; they used torches to find their way until Sheriff Schley bumped into something hanging from the ceiling. It





was the corpse of Bernice Worden, she was upside down, naked, headless, and had been cut open. The body had been gutted to remove traces of blood and gore. The policeman stumbled outside, fell to his knees in the snow and threw up.

Captain Schoephoerster called for back-up, and soon there was a group of local and state police assembled, preparing to enter the Gein home. The building had no electricity or indoor plumbing, so the police carried out their search with torches and lanterns before a generator was brought in.

They were horrified by what they found at the farmhouse. Mary Hogan's head was found in a paper bag; Bernice Worden's head was found in a burlap sack – it had a nail in each ear so that he could hang it up as a trophy; there were parts from at least 15 bodies in his fridge; nine masks made from human skin; skulls decorated a bed in one room; ten bowls had been created from other human skulls; lampshades were made from human skin; a belt was studded with nipples; a patchwork shirt was made of human skin; there was a shoebox of human noses and nine vulvas; a pair of lips was attached to a string to open and close a blind. On the kitchen stove was a human heart in a pan.

Gein initially denied any knowledge of the happenings at his house. The locals were surprised by his arrest. Interviewed on television, one said: “He was a very nice man although a little odd,” while another opined: “I figured he was perfectly harmless and rather simple.” Tests later showed that Gein was of average IQ.

Once he had his man in custody, Sheriff Schley asked his deputies if Gein had confessed, and was told that he had not.

# INSIDE ED GEIN'S ABBATOIRE

## HIS BUTCHERY SKILLS WORKED JUST AS WELL ON HUMAN ANIMALS

Bernice Worden was treated by Gein as a farmer would have treated a hog for the dinner table. He shot her with a .22 hunting rifle as a typical method of the time of dispatching an animal. It would have taken some strength to haul her hefty corpse (which was about the same weight as a pig prime for slaughter) into the back of his truck and from there, onto the crossbar for preparation – that would be a two-man job, normally.

A hog would have been scalded to remove hair and a layer of dermis, but Gein wanted the skin as close to its natural state as possible. With a sharp knife and whetstone, he decapitated, gutted and bled her.

Worden's head had been neatly removed and taken away from her body. It was found nearby in a burlap sack.

One of the first officers who entered Gein's house actually bumped into Worden's hanging corpse. The experience stayed with him for the rest of his life.

Just the way mother had shown him on swine, Gein had split Worden from crotch right up through the ribcage and had removed the offal.

Her wrists had also been bound by rope and pulled up along the length of her body and tied to the crossbar.

A crossbar had been fixed across Bernice Worden's ankles and she had been hung by her feet with rope from the ceiling.



YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE

# THE CO-ED BUTCHER

6.6"

TOO BIG, TOO SMART, TOO STRONG:  
THEY HAD NO CHANCE AGAINST  
SERIAL KILLER EDMUND KEMPER

WORDS TANITA MATTHEWS

6'9"  
300LBS  
IQ 145

6.0"

5.6"

5.0"



**W**ith a near-genius IQ score, Edmund Kemper towers at more than two metres tall and weighs approximately 136 kilograms. To the outside world he was viewed as the 'gentle giant'. But beneath the surface he harboured a turbulent and violent rage towards his alcoholic and abusive mother that festered into a mass of perverse homicides. Eventually giving himself up for his crimes, he freely gave every chilling and gruesome detail of the fate of his eight victims. Was this a sign of remorse? Or did the notorious Co-ed Killer feign a pattern of behaviour that would portray the disturbed maniac as a victim of his matriarchal upbringing?

## NATURE AND NURTURE

Born on 18 December 1948 in Burbank, California, Kemper certainly had a less than happy childhood. His parents' relationship was unstable and his father left when Kemper was just nine years old. Four years later, his parents were divorced. His mother constantly compared Kemper, who was the middle child of three, to his father, criticising and demeaning him.

Kemper freely admits that he had wanted to kill his mother since he was eight. These emphatic feelings of self-loathing that had been instilled in him propelled his sadistic fantasies. As a preteen he would insist he and his sisters play his favourite game – 'gas chamber'. The girls would blindfold their brother and place him in a chair where he would writhe about and act out a harrowing death. His mother noticed the strange games her son played, giving her all the more reason to mock and ridicule him, calling him "a real weirdo". The young Kemper also liked to rip the heads off of his sisters' dolls – an act that aroused him.

Soon enough, this no longer satisfied him and he turned his attention to the family cat, which he buried alive before digging the dead body back up, decapitating it and displaying

## THE GIRLS WERE THEN DECAPITATED AND KEMPER MASTURBATED WITH THEIR HEADS BEFORE BURYING THE VICTIMS IN THE WOODS

the head on a spike. This would be the first trophy of a future serial killer. He again targeted the replacement cat, stabbing it with a machete, drenching the feline in its own blood as it died. In *Edmund Kemper: The Co-Ed Butcher Serial Killer*, which was a documentary about the life of the killer, forensic psychologist Louis Schlesinger said: "There are many, many serial sexual murderers that have a history of killing cats, torturing cats, tormenting cats. Why cats? Because cats are a female symbol." Clearly from a young age Kemper's violent rage towards women was coursing through his veins.

Unhappily living with a mother who locked him in the basement at night and attacked his self-confidence, Kemper ran away from home and decided to find his father at the age of 14, only to find him already settled into a new life with his new family. This did not include Edmund. A rejected Kemper junior returned home to find that his mother and her new husband also had an idyllic life without the troubled teen. He was sent to live with his father's parents on their ranch in North Fork, California.

## FIRST MURDERS

At the age of 15, Kemper used a .22-calibre rifle to shoot his grandmother at their home. The rifle was a Christmas present his grandfather had given him to shoot rabbits around the farm. After he lodged three bullets into the back of her head, he stabbed her numerous times in her back, just for good measure. When Edmund Kemper Senior returned home from shopping, his grandson shot him in the driveway

**BELOW** Victims Rosalind Thorpe and Alice Liu were picked up by Kemper on the UC Santa Cruz campus, who killed them both after he left the university grounds





in a bid to ensure that he would not see the horrific sight of his dead wife.

When Kemper rang his mother to confess to his crime, she urged him to call the police, which he did, later explaining to officers how he had, "Wanted to see what it would be like to kill grandma." He was sent to the Atascadero State Hospital for the criminally insane, where he was declared a paranoid schizophrenic. Just five years after he was incarcerated, Kemper was declared sane by psychiatrists and released on his 21st birthday, although it has been suggested by criminal psychologists that he imitated the signs of sanity in order to manipulate his release. He was released to his mother's care, despite objections from Kemper's doctor that it might trigger violent episodes again. Kemper himself also objected to this, but his juvenile criminal record was expunged. Once on the outside and with little state help to rehabilitate him, the hate he had for his mother resurfaced and the flame was fanned with her critical tongue. Speaking during an interview for a documentary entitled *Murder: No Apparent Motive*, Kemper said: "My mother was a sick, angry, hungry and very sad woman. I hated her but I wanted to love my mother." The hate he had for the woman who gave him life festered and he once again fantasised about killing her, so much so that these feelings began to take control of him. A few years later, the urge to kill again was itching underneath his skin.

## A SMOKING GUN

Having been detained for much of his teenage years, Kemper had spent a lot of time around adults rather than people his own age. When he emerged from the hospital, he found that he did not speak or act the same as other 21-year-olds, which meant it was hard for him to communicate with peers. Nevertheless, Kemper attended community college under strict orders from the hospital. From there he went on to work a series of menial jobs. In 1971, he finally settled for a short while working with the State of California's Department of Public Works/Division of Highways in District 4. He had previously applied to be a state trooper, but because of his size and stature, 'Big Ed' – as he was

known to the Santa Cruz officers – was rejected. He bought a motorcycle to cheer himself up from his rejection but crashed it. He also purchased a car – a yellow Ford Galaxy. His mother, who was now divorced from her third husband, had begun working at the new university in Santa Cruz as an administrative assistant. She had also moved into a duplex apartment on Ord Drive, Aptos.

Feeling devoid of human contact, Kemper started to pick up female hitchhikers in his car, which closely resembled a police cruiser. He regularly delivered students to the university where his mother worked. To his own estimation, he safely delivered 150 female co-eds to the campus. He was testing himself, daring himself to go a little further each time. To start with, there would be no weapon, but then one day, he hid a .44-calibre magnum under his leg as he drove young girls around campus. Inside his car he kept plastic bags, knives, a blanket and handcuffs that he had acquired supposedly from an unsuspecting police officer acquaintance. Kemper developed his own style of picking the women up, giving the impression he was pressed for time and not really interested in helping them. When they got into his two-door vehicle, he would pretend that their door was not shut properly, before jamming the lock, slipping something behind it to trap his victims.

## PULLING THE TRIGGER

On 7 May 1972, he offered a lift to his first victims, Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa, both 18 years old and making their way to Stanford University. Kemper drove the pair to a quiet area, pulled his handgun from beneath his leg then grabbed Anita and forced her into the boot of the car. He then turned his attention to Mary Ann. He handcuffed the second co-ed and laid her face down on the backseat. Placing a bag over Mary Ann's head, Kemper attempted to strangle her. In a desperate bid to survive, she bit through the terrycloth, but her resistance angered Kemper, who stabbed her in the throat. He then went back to Anita, who had heard everything. Kemper repeatedly stabbed her and shut the boot, leaving her dying. The girls were then decapitated and



**“ HE DROVE HER TO A REMOTE LOCATION, STRANGLED HER WITH HER SCARF AND RAPED HER LIMP CORPSE WITH THE HEAD SEVERED FROM THE BODY ”**

## NO APPARENT MOTIVE

SHOT, STRANGLED AND DISMEMBERED: HE LEFT A TRAIL OF BODIES BEFORE HE KILLED HIS MUM



**MAUDE KEMPER**

Age: 66

Kemper's first victim, his grandmother, was shot in the back of the head three times with a rifle and stabbed with a kitchen knife.



**EDMUND EMIL KEMPER SENIOR**

Age: 72

Not wanting his grandfather to see his dead wife, Kemper shot Edmund Sr on the driveway.



**MARY ANN PESCE**

Age: 18

Initially Kemper attempted to suffocate Pesce with a bag, but when this didn't work, he stabbed her in the throat.



**ANITA LUCHESSA**

Age: 18

Kemper tied Luchessa up in the boot of his car and, after he was finished with Pesce, stabbed her to death.



**AIKO KOO**

Age: 15

After a first failed attempt at suffocating Koo, Kemper strangled her with her own scarf before decapitating her.





When picking up his victims, Kemper would wear thin framed glasses, as opposed to his thicker framed specs, in order to portray himself as a friendly driver



**ABOVE** Santa Cruz County District Attorney Peter A Chang Jr (right) and Inspector Richard Verbrugge questioned Kemper when he arrived at Pueblo County Jail on 25 April 1973 after he handed himself over to police as the Co-ed Killer

**LEFT** Santa Cruz County Sheriff deputy Bruce Colomy spent lot of time with Kemper during his trial. Kemper said Colomy was, "Like the Father I wish I had had"



**CINDY SCHALL**

**Age: 19**

A single fatal shot to the head killed Schall as she hitchhiked with Kemper, who then decapitated her.



**ROSALIND THORPE**

**Age: 23**

Thorpe was sat in the front seat of Kemper's car when he shot her in the side of the head with a .22-calibre pistol.



**ALICE LIU**

**Age: 21**

After she witnessed the death of her fellow hitchhiker and classmate Thorpe, Kemper shot his last co-ed victim multiple times.



**CLARNELL STRANDBERG**

**Age: 52**

Kemper bludgeoned his mother to death with a claw hammer as she slept in her bed and then decapitated her.



**SARA 'SALLY' HALLETT**

**Age: 59**

Not satisfied by the death of his mother, Kemper strangled her friend with a scarf after inviting her over to the house.



## “KEMPER ATTACKED HIS MOTHER, SMASHING HER HEAD WITH A CLAW HAMMER AS SHE SLEPT, BEFORE DECAPITATING HER”

Kemper masturbated with their heads before burying the victims in the woods. While remains from Pesce were later discovered, Luchessa's were never found.

Kemper's attention soon turned to other matters – his weapon. Before claiming his next victim, Kemper purchased a .22-calibre pistol. Just four months later, he struck again, targeting 15-year-old dance student Aiko Koo. He drove her to a remote location, strangled her with her scarf and had sex with her limp corpse with the head severed from the body.

Despite his grim secret, Kemper hung out at a local bar across the street from the courthouse known as The Jury Room. There he gained the trust of the police officers, exchanging pleasantries and subtly digging for information, making himself a friendly nuisance so as not to draw too much attention to himself as a suspect. Speaking with officers who were involved in the case, he was able to determine what kind of information they were privy to, such as speculation as to how the co-eds were dying.

In January 1973, 19-year-old Cindy Schall was picked up and shot by Kemper. In what was becoming a pattern for the murderer, her body was dismembered and violated. Kemper buried Schall's head in his mother's back garden below her bedroom window. He later claimed it was because his mother always “wanted people to look up to her”. Schall's body parts were thrown over a cliff, only to be discovered just a day after she disappeared.

Although the relationship between Kemper and his mother was never a warm and loving one, on 5 February 1973, Kemper's temper boiled over following a particularly bad row with her. He told himself: “The first girl that's halfway decent that I pick up, I'm gonna blow her brains out.” Rosalind Thorpe, 24, and Alice Liu, 23, were in the wrong place at the wrong time when they hitched a ride with Kemper. He shot Thorpe first in the head as she sat in the front seat of his car. Witnessing the fate of her classmate, Liu panicked and vainly attempted to dodge her death; Kemper missed the young student twice, shooting her in the hands before finally firing a bullet into her temple. Not quite dead, Kemper shot her one last time. Liu was the last co-ed victim that Kemper killed: with his killing spree picking up pace, the fantasy of killing his mother was getting harder and harder for him to ignore.

### HINDSIGHT

Kemper rationalised the killings following his arrest. Speaking in the *Murder: No Apparent Motive* interview, he said that he had targeted these women because they represented everything his mother stood for and loved, and he wanted to destroy it. When asked what caused him to kill these young women, Kemper said: “My frustration, my inability to communicate socially, sexually. I wasn't impotent, but emotionally I was impotent. I was scared to death in failing in male/female relationships. I knew absolutely nothing about that whole area.” The idea of possessing these women aroused him both mentally and sexually. Kemper grew up to develop very little self-esteem at the hands of his mother. He claimed she would make him feel socially awkward when speaking with other females, even locking him in the

basement out of a fear that he would molest his younger sister. The fragmented borders of Kemper's fantasies and the bitter reality were something he was able to flip between at the drop of the hat. One minute he would be picking up co-eds, the next he would be murdering them in a rural and remote area. He would return home with their severed heads in a camera bag belonging to one of the victims and smile to neighbours. He recalled: “Walking up to my apartment past a happy young couple coming down the stairs, who nodded and smiled at me as they went by – ‘Good evening’ – and they're going out on a date, where I'd love to be going. And I'm aware of both of these realities and the distance between those two are so dramatic, so amazing, so violent that I can feel the wheels squeaking inside, that was really pulling on it. And I can imagine that at that point some people break but I didn't literally go insane. I didn't get lost.”

Kemper's disturbing behaviour towards his victims knew no bounds – mutilating their bodies, molesting their corpses and demeaning their remains by dumping them in ravines and gorges. He even claimed to have made a casserole with the remains of one of his victims and he kept trophies of their



## KEMPER'S KILLER CAR

ON THE OUTSIDE IT SEEMED A HARMLESS RIDE TO THE NEXT DESTINATION. BUT INSIDE WAS A MURDEROUS TRAP

### RADIO ANTENNAE

Kemper fitted his car, which from the outside closely resembled an unmarked police vehicle, with a radio transmitter, a microphone and a large whip antenna. He used this to listen in on police transmissions.







**LEFT** The sticker on the far left of Kemper's car bumper was a sign to students at the University of California, Santa Cruz that he was a trusted university official and therefore safe to travel with. His mother had given him the sticker so he could pick her up from the university

hair, teeth and patches of skin. Kemper himself has delved into the deep psychological trauma that surrounded his need to decapitate the young women, recalling a memory from a young age in which his father beheaded the family's pet chickens and his mother forced him to eat them. However, he admits that this is not the sole reason, and that the fantasies surrounding severed heads would take years to develop into something much more disturbing.

## MATRICIDE

When Kemper describes the moment he had been preparing for his whole life, he explains how he had known the exact day he was going to kill his mother. He entered her room when she returned from a party one night. He claims she had sneered at the idea that he may want to "stay up all night and talk". Instead Kemper wished her good night. He explained: "In a rage, I went right back in. 'For seven years,' she said 'I haven't had sex with a man because of you, my murderous son.' This was one of our arguments, and I cut off her head and I humiliated her corpse and

## BOOT

Here police found a bloodstained knife, coat and bags as well as a .44-calibre magnum. There were also hair strands and bloodstains from his victims' bodies.

## PASSENGER DOOR

Kemper would jam the passenger door making it impossible for his victims to escape. He would pretend that their door was not shut properly before propping an object behind the lever so it would not open.

## BACK SEAT

Bloodstains were found in the back seat where Kemper had murdered Lui and Pesce.

## DRIVER'S SEAT

Kemper stored his .22-calibre automatic pistol under his seat while driving. Police had paid him a visit to confiscate his .44-calibre magnum amid his crimes due to concerns about his previous detainment. Kemper feared at this stage he would be caught, but he wasn't.

**LEFT** After a motorcycle accident claim landed Kemper \$15,000, he bought a new Ford Galaxy 500 convertible, the same model as the one in this photo and far more practical for picking up hitchhikers



said, 'There'. You know? Six young women dead because of the way she raises her son and the way her son is raised, the way he grows up, and what are her closing words? 'I suppose you wanna sit up all night and talk?' God I wish I had."

In what was to be the penultimate killing, Kemper attacked his mother, smashing her head with a claw hammer as she slept, before decapitating her and using her head to simulate oral sex. He then used her head as a dartboard, cut out her larynx and attempted to mangle it in the garbage disposal. However, the machine could not break up the tough tissue and regurgitated it back into the sink. "That seemed appropriate, as much as she'd bitched and screamed and yelled for so many years," said Kemper.

Not satisfied with the successful completion of what was deemed to be his final goal, Kemper called his mother's friend Sara 'Sally' Hallett and invited her to the house. Shortly after she arrived, he murdered the unsuspecting friend, had sex with her lifeless body and hid the pair in a closet. He then fled. Kemper drove for several days, listening for details of his crimes on a radio receiver-transmitter, but there were none. Eventually, having driven to Pueblo, Colorado, more than 1,000 miles away, he phoned Santa Cruz police from a phone box and confessed to his crimes. The police didn't believe 'Big Ed', but when Kemper relayed specific information to them, they set out to arrest him. Kemper was brought back to Santa Cruz by officers, where he relayed every grisly detail of the murders, including the locations where the bodies had been buried, taking officers on a six-hour tour of California to retrieve body parts. When standing trial, his defence attorney attempted to tell the court that Kemper was insane. Kemper pleaded not guilty. The trial lasted less than three weeks and on 8 November 1973, a six-man, six-woman jury deliberated for more than five hours. They found him sane and guilty of eight counts of first-degree murder.

Curiously, the judge asked Kemper what he thought his punishment should be. Kemper requested that he be tortured to death in the gas chambers, as per the fantasy that he had when he was a young boy. The USA at this time had suspended capital punishment and instead he was given eight life sentences, to run concurrently. Despite his abhorrent crimes, Kemper claims he still felt remorse during the trial, especially when the fathers of his first victims testified about the loss of their daughters. "The day those fathers testified in court was very hard for me. I felt terrible. I wanted to talk to them about their daughters, comfort them... but what could I say?"

## THE FALL OF THE GIANT

Kemper was just 24 when he was sentenced. Now 67, he is a long-serving inmate at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville, an all-male prison. At one stage he requested psychosurgery, an invasive and drastic procedure that would involve inserting a probe into his brain. This procedure is said to kill brain tissue, which Kemper thought might cure him of his compulsive sexual aggression. However, his request was denied. Since his incarceration, he has become a model inmate, helping to read books on tape for the blind. But at each of his parole hearings he has been denied release. Regardless, Kemper himself has suggested that he not be released back into society anyway. He has been the subject of a number of interviews since he was imprisoned. He claims that he hopes the outcome will be that others learn about offenders like him and that he helps prevent others like him from killing.

**RIGHT** Kemper had applied to be a law enforcement officer in 1969, but was rejected because at more than two metres tall, he exceeded the maximum height regulation for such a position





# MURDER ON HIS MIND

IS KEMPER’S WILLINGNESS TALK ABOUT HIS MURDERS A SIGN OF REMORSE, OR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT? REAL CRIME SPEAKS TO AN EXPERT WHO HAS TALKED DIRECTLY WITH THE SERIAL KILLER

During one televised interview, Kemper begins to cry when he talks about his mother’s murder. Is this a sincere admission of guilt? What is he seeking to gain from this emotional display?

In the videos, he cries for himself, mostly, not his victims. Other recordings show him as smug, self-centered and unrepentant.

Kemper likes to present himself as an expert on serial murder, which does suggest his inherent lack of remorse. Kemper had a serious dependence on his mother but he also hated her for the way that she would criticise and belittle him, as well as abandon him. He might also have despised himself for being so dependent on her.

Kemper is and was manipulative, so it’s not possible to say how much of his response was sincere and how much for show. He did make a statement that he shouldn’t be let out of prison, which supports the probability that he is not remorseful.

Is it possible for serial killers and psychopaths like Kemper to show any remorse for the victims and their families? Do you think they feel any regret for the effect their actions might have had?

Not all serial killers are psychopaths and not all psychopaths are killers or even violent, but the hallmark of a psychopath, if you go by the Hare PCL-R assessment, is a lack of remorse. I’ve seen a lot of interviews with Kemper and did not see indicators of sorrow over his acts or remorse.

I think that he did love his mother in a way, but he also hated her. That is not unusual in matricides. I understand from someone who corresponded with him that he did at times feel badly, but it’s possible he was saying what she wanted to hear.

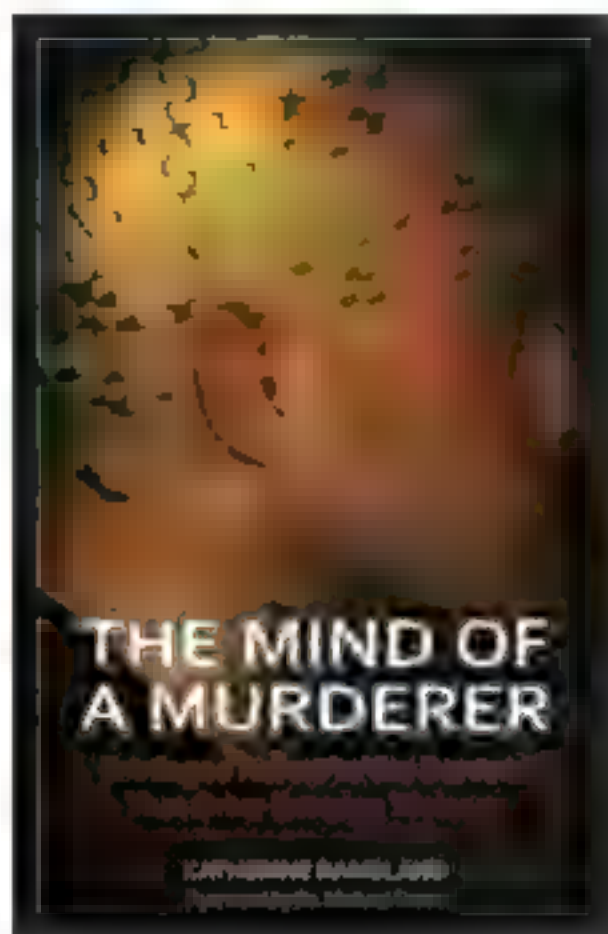
Maybe in retrospect, after many years in prison and with maturity, he has a different sense of his past, but at the time, his interviews showed intelligent self-reflection but little sense of what he had done to his victims.

I’ve met three people who interviewed him at length and none thought he was remorseful. I’ve also met serial killers who say that they feel badly but whose actions tell a different story. I don’t think you can read Kemper’s responses that easily, one way or the other.

How would the toxic relationship Kemper had with his mother and the abandonment he would have felt by his father at such an early age affect his mindset as he progressed from his teens into adulthood?

Kemper developed into a thrill killer, but there was also revenge and hatred in what he did. He played a game with the co-eds (as he described it). He was cruel. He treated the victims in a disgusting manner, before and after their deaths. If he hadn’t killed his mother, he would have kept going because it made him feel powerful when the rest of his life was powerless.

BIO DR KATHERINE RAMSLAND



**Forensic Psychologist**  
Dr Ramsland is a professor of forensic psychology at DeSales University in Pennsylvania. She has written many

books and articles on the subject of serial killers, including *The Mind Of A Murderer: Privileged To The Demons That Drive Extreme Violence*. She has also communicated with Kemper herself while he was in prison.

Kemper handed himself in to the police once he had killed his mother and her best friend, Sara ‘Sally’ Hallett. What do you think this action says about him as a killer?

I think Kemper turned himself in because he had no resources for his flight, not because he was remorseful. He had long mooched off his mother and had been unable to make a go of being on his own.

He lacked self-confidence. On the run, he eventually realised that he had nowhere to go and probably figured that, without any resources, the police would catch up to him eventually.

I don’t think he turned himself in because he was feeling remorse, especially not when you look at what he said (and how he said it) when he directed the police officers to his home to find the bodies. Any show of tears can be interpreted in a number of ways, not necessarily as remorse.

“ IF HE HADN’T KILLED HIS MOTHER, HE WOULD HAVE KEPT GOING BECAUSE IT MADE HIM FEEL POWERFUL ”



Kemper talked of irresistible “energies, raging inside” in an interview for *Murder: No Apparent Motive*

© Corbis; Alamy



## TED BUNDY ON TRIAL


# DEFENDING THE DEVIL

THE USA'S MOST FEARED SERIAL KILLER FOUGHT THE SYSTEM HARD TO MAINTAIN HIS INNOCENCE, BUT ON TRIAL, HIS CHARM WAS TRANSPARENT. HIS LAWYER TOLD REAL CRIME WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO DEFEND THE 'DEVIL', AND TO SEE HIS TRUE COLOURS LAID BARE

WORDS TANITA MATTHEWS





BIO	<b>JOHN HENRY BROWNE</b>
 <p>Criminal defence attorney John Henry Browne is based in Seattle, Washington, and has represented numerous infamous clients, including Ted Bundy. His book, <i>The Devil's Defender</i> details his life and career working with high-profile criminals and is available to buy from <a href="http://chicagoreviewpress.com">chicagoreviewpress.com</a></p>	





**T**he interesting thing was when I had a conversation with him in Aspen after his first escape,” said John Henry Browne, one of Ted Bundy’s many defence attorneys. “He turned to me and said, ‘Where would a person go in the United States to get the death penalty for certain?’ I told him without hesitating, ‘Florida or Texas,’ because the statutes are upheld as constitutional. So he escapes the second time, makes it to Michigan before they realise that he’s escaped... He could have got lost in Chicago. If you want to get lost in the United States, Chicago is the place to do it. But what does he do? He goes to a small college town in Florida, the place I told him that he would get the death penalty. So I think that journey of his is very interesting.”

When it comes to serial killers, Ted Bundy needs little by the way of demonising. A handsome, charming and intelligent man aged just 27 at the time of his arrest, he was the epitome of evil. His need to cause suffering knew no bounds as he embarked on a campaign of terror across the US in the 1970s. Girls with dark hair parted down the middle – who resembled his ‘typical’ victim – hacked off their own tresses before dying what was left a different shade. They avoided going out alone, and trembled in fear every time another young woman from their hometown disappeared. But when the entity of their nightmares was caught, it took them a moment to distinguish the handsome, lawyer-like monster from the crowd of legal experts.

His presence in court was the central focus for thousands; Bundy captivated a nation and intrigued them as to how, beneath the surface of a calm and collected young man, there could lay a tempestuous abomination capable of murdering dozens of women.

## BUNDY'S BIGGEST BLUNDER

Parked outside his home in Salt Lake County, Utah, at 3am, Sergeant Bob Hayward had been finishing up his shift when a crackle over the radio had him respond to a call for assistance. But after a wrong turn, he found himself staring at a suspicious vehicle parked outside his neighbour’s home: a tan Volkswagen. He knew that the owners of this property, a married couple, were out of town and had left their two teenage daughters home alone. Hayward wanted to get a better look at the licence plate but before he got the chance, the driver turned off his own lights and sped off.

Hayward chased the vehicle to an abandoned gas station. “I’m lost,” the driver piped up when Hayward came face to face with him. The man in the tan-coloured vehicle was clean looking with dark hair and dark eyes, dressed in all black.

The officer enquired as to where the driver was from and what he was doing in the area, to which he responded that he was a law student at the University of Utah and had been to see *Towering Inferno* at the local drive through (a plausible excuse, had that particular title been playing the evening of 16 August 1975.) Hayward knew otherwise and began to inspect the car. He found that the passenger seat had been removed. He also discovered a ski mask, pantyhose, a crowbar, an ice pick and a set of handcuffs within the vehicle. The officer arrested the driver on suspicion of burglary, booking him into the local jail. But police had no idea at the time that the man in their custody was responsible for the high-profile tri-state murders of three young girls and dozens of others across the country. They finally had in their company the notoriously elusive Ted Bundy.

**ABOVE** Ted Bundy’s trial for the Chi Omega killings was the first to be televised nationally across the USA, as well as being attended by 250 journalists from news organisations around the world





**LEFT** When caught by Officer Hayward, Bundy attempted to explain away the unusual items found in his car by saying that they were tools for his studies at the university

## A STRANGER SMILES

Hayward knew Bundy was lying about his reasons for being in the neighbourhood that night. He called the Salt Lake county sheriff, who assigned Detective Jerry Thompson to the case. Thompson knew there were a series of femicides in neighbouring states that were troubling investigators, and the name 'Ted' and description of his car gave them even more cause for concern. Thompson obtained a warrant to search Bundy's home. Among his possessions he found a series of incriminating items including gas receipts placing Bundy in each state at around the time that a woman had gone missing or been murdered there. A pair of shoes that matched a description given to officers by 18-year-old Utah resident Carol DaRonch also caught the detective's attention.

In November 1974, Bundy had lured DaRonch into his car using the alias 'Officer Roseland', before trying to restrain her with handcuffs, but she struggled free. DaRonch had been one of the lucky ones. In her victim statement, she gave specific details of the car driven by her attacker and gave a description of him, providing police with a promising lead on what were being called the 'Ted Murders'.

Throughout the 1970s, Colorado's, Washington's and Oregon's young women were seemingly falling off the face of the planet, only to turn up weeks or sometimes months later dead. The first documented victim was an 18-year-old Washington woman named Karen Sparks. Bludgeoned and sexually assaulted in her bed. She survived her attack, but 21-year-old Lynda Healy was not so fortunate. Abducted from her home about a month later, her frozen remains were found at a Taylor Mountain site. Forensic techniques were

nowhere near as advanced as today's, and the killer left each crime scene scarce of any evidence.

Hereafter, Bundy's modus operandi owed much to his charm and ability to gain the trust of unsuspecting women. Often affecting a British accent, Bundy wooed his victims to their deaths. He also feigned disability to make himself appear helpless and therefore harmless. 23-year-old Janice Ott fell for Bundy's forged incapacity, at Washington's Lake Sammamish State Park in July 1974.

As she soaked up the summer rays, Bundy's meek-looking frame cast a shadow over her resting place. Bundy asked for the young girl's help moving his sailboat. He couldn't do it himself because he had "broken his arm," he told her, gesturing to the cast around his limb. According to Bundy, he took Ott to an abandoned hunting cabin and raped her. He later returned with Denise Naslund, who he also raped, before killing the pair. Their remains were found in a wooded area a few miles from the park where they had last been seen. They were not the first nor the last of his victims. Each of Bundy's "calculated" ruses was as effective as the last.

Two months after his arrest by Hayward, DaRonch singled Bundy out in a police line-up as 'Officer Roseland'. In a second line-up, witnesses alleged they had seen Bundy at Viewmont High School on 8 November 1974 (hours after DaRonch was attacked). That evening, student Debra Kent had disappeared. While her body was never found, police believed they had enough evidence to charge Bundy with her kidnapping as well as an attempted criminal assault on DaRonch. A key found in the parking lot searched during the investigation into Kent's disappearance fit the handcuffs left around DaRonch's wrists the day she was attacked. Possessions at Bundy's property included a brochure advertising a play at Kent's high school.

Bundy was released on bail but evidence was mounting up against him, and he decided to seek legal counsel. It was that winter that Bundy enlisted the help of defence attorney John Henry Browne. Browne said that his first encounter with Bundy was "strange", and that he knew early on that Bundy was someone who tried to appear normal but clearly wasn't. "The only person I would consider a devil in the traditional sense was Ted Bundy," said Browne, whose memoir *The Devil's Defender* gives an insight into his time spent with what would be one of his most famous clients.

## BUNDY'S FIRST TRIAL

Born Theodore Cowell on 24 November 1946, Bundy grew up in Philadelphia believing his grandparents were his real parents and his mother was his sister. Later in life he discovered that he was a bastard child, and the real identity of his father remains unknown. His mother told him that a sailor, whose identity has never been found in any records, had seduced her. Some speculated that Bundy had been born of an incestuous encounter between his mother and her father, although there is no definitive proof of this theory.

What became known of Bundy's childhood was confusing. Throughout his life he told different accounts to different people. In one story he claimed to have admired his grandfather, the man who raised him during the first years

**“ PEOPLE OFTEN SAY TED BUNDY WAS CHARMING, HANDSOME AND INTELLIGENT, BUT I DON'T THINK ALL THAT WAS TRUE ”**





Numerous witnesses and acquaintances noted how every time they saw Bundy, his appearance changed slightly, but his eyes, described as "evil" by many of his victims, were easily distinguishable



of his life, while in another he depicted him to be a violent bigot with a temper to be feared. When his (real) mother remarried, her new husband adopted her illegitimate son. At school he had been a bright and promising child, but became known as a peeping Tom. According to old classmates who spoke to crime author Ann Rule for her book *The Stranger Beside Me*, Bundy was a well-liked kid at school, despite his own recollection that he hadn't had many friends and found it difficult to connect with other children.

Bundy's life was one long and drawn out downward spiral, even beyond his first trial on 3 February 1976 in Utah. Under the advice of his attorney, John O'Connell, Bundy waived his right to a jury, leaving his fate in the hands of Third District Court Judge Stewart Hanson Jr. But against O'Connell's better judgement, Bundy decided to testify. While a shy and shaken DaRonch sat on the witness stand for most of the afternoon, Bundy exuded confidence in his façade of innocence and had an answer for everything.

Asked to identify the man who attacked her, she singled out Bundy. O'Connell attempted to disprove her memory by drawing upon the fact she had been shown numerous pictures of possible assailants. "Is there an effect on the witness trying to recall a face if he or she is shown a great many pictures?" he asked a psychologist called to testify. "Yes," they replied. "The more pictures a victim sees... the more chance of failure to correctly identify a picture." The psychologist also added that a victim remembers less about their ordeal in a stressful situation. Taking the stand, Bundy told the judge he had not encountered DaRonch on the day of

her attack. He admitted to owning a pair of handcuffs, saying he had found them at the local dump.

"People often say Ted Bundy was charming, handsome and intelligent, but I don't think all that was true," Browne said. "He was not as bright as everyone says he was. He was manipulative to the extreme." Such a character was clearly on display outside the courtroom. Bundy tried to charm the media into believing he was a saint caught up in a misunderstanding. "I intend to complete my legal education and become a lawyer, a damn good lawyer," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, the families and friends of the women who had gone missing since Bundy's arrival in the state in 1974 looked on, outraged and desperate to know what had happened to their loved ones. First to disappear from Utah was 16-year-old cheerleader Nancy Wilcox. Deemed a runaway at first, her body, similarly to Kent's, has never been found. Then there had been the police chief's daughter, Melissa Smith, who was raped and strangled, her nude body found in the mountains just weeks later. Laura Aime, just a year older than Wilcox, was also found in the mountains. She had been beaten, raped and strangled.

Despite his charm, the judge saw straight through Bundy, and after only a weekend of deliberation, found him guilty

**ABOVE** As well as defending Ted Bundy, John Henry Browne has become famous for defending some of humanity's worst killers, including Benjamin Ng and Army Staff Sergeant Robert Bales

**“ IF HE HAD BEEN RELEASED, THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT HE WOULD HAVE GONE ON TO KILL MORE PEOPLE ”**



of Kent's kidnapping and DaRonch's attack. Bundy couldn't be convicted of killing the other girls; there was either too little evidence or no body to prove his guilt. He was sentenced to between one and 15 years in prison. Although he still proclaimed his innocence to the media, Colorado investigators decided in October they had enough evidence to try him for the 1974 murder of 23-year-old Caryn Campbell.

A guide to Colorado ski lodges found in Bundy's possessions was key evidence of his involvement in her death. The Wildwood Inn was bookmarked – the same one Campbell had vanished from in January. Her body was found miles from the inn a month later, encircled by a crimson patch alluding to the blunt force bludgeoning she had received hours after she was last seen. By early 1977, Bundy was extradited to Aspen, Colorado, to face trial once again.

## A DEATH WISH

In Colorado, Bundy decided to represent himself at his trial. During the recess at his pre-trial hearing in Pitkin County Courthouse, Bundy leapt from a second-floor window. With his shackles loosened to allow him more movement, it was just the opportunity Bundy needed to escape. He sprained his ankle during the leap, but still he remained at large for eight days before he was rearrested. Bundy maintained that in Aspen he would not be given a fair trial as a media sensation had erupted, and he demanded to be sent to Glenwood Springs for the rest of his trial. The judge granted his request.

There was little evidence tying Bundy to Campbell's murder. The ski lodge brochures, gas receipts from the surrounding area and two "indistinguishable" hairs found in Bundy's seized vehicle held very little evidential value. A witness claimed to have seen Bundy leaving the lodge the night Campbell went missing, but at the pre-trial hearing, she was unable to identify him. Before the trial date, in December 1977, Bundy escaped again. Browne heard from him just hours before he escaped, and when the news broke, he became concerned about what Bundy would do next. But by then Bundy had been out of prison for a day, and his absence was undetected by prison guards. He was hiding in plain sight in Chicago and, for all intents and purposes, could have stayed hidden. But instead he went to Tallahassee in Florida.

A little over two weeks later, his murderous urges gained momentum once again, and he paid a visit to Florida State University's Chi Omega sorority house. He broke in, killing two girls: Margaret Bowman and Lisa Levy, aged 21 and 20 respectively, and seriously injuring two others. All four victims had suffered horrific sexual abuse. Levy had been violated with a hairspray canister and almost had her nipple torn off in Bundy's frenzied attack. Surprisingly, local investigators were at this time unaware of Bundy, who had once again left the scene completely devoid of evidence. Less than a month later, 12-year-old Kimberley Leach was abducted from school, sexually assaulted and killed by Bundy, who strangled her and left her body in an old pig pen. Leach would be Bundy's last victim. He was caught by a cop less than a week later driving with stolen licence plates. Browne says he thinks Bundy had a death wish. "I think he got caught on purpose because he was in the best shape he had ever been in, and the cop who caught him was an overweight 50-year-old guy. Ted could have easily outrun him. I don't know what prompted that death wish – whether he knew he was dangerous and evil and had to be stopped, which I doubt. But I think it was more that he wanted to continue playing the game of manipulating the system."



**ABOVE** During his first Colorado trial, Bundy escaped out of the window of the library of the Pitkin County Courthouse having asked to use it to assist him with his defence in court

Nevertheless, from the county jail Bundy called Browne. The police hadn't caught on to who he was. Under the disguise of 'Mr Rosebud', he called Browne, who urged him to tell the authorities who he was before they found out themselves. Bundy promised he would, but not before spending one more night invisible to the detectives. Browne, torn by his professional and moral ethics, was left to wonder what Bundy would do next. "I thought I could call a journalist friend of mine who knew Ted, so then the journalist could call the police, but then that would be backtracking on my ethical responsibilities. I didn't sleep that night and was very relieved that the newspapers showed he had been arrested in Florida. If he had been released, there is no question that he would have gone on to kill more people."

## CONFESSIONS OF A CONTROL FREAK

Luckily for Browne's conscience, Bundy revealed himself to the authorities and he was arrested for the murders. His crimes since his escape from Glenwood Springs were at the forefront of the state's investigation: the double homicide at Chi Omega, the two surviving victims, an attack on a local student a half hour later whose injuries to her skull left her deaf, and Leach's slaying. Browne and lawyer Millard Farmer, a death penalty opponent from Atlanta, worked with the authorities to tailor a plea bargain for Bundy – should he confess to the crimes he had committed in Florida, then the charges against him in Washington, Colorado and Utah could not be brought forward for the death penalty.

Bundy signed the paperwork to say he would confess, making it a triumphant moment for Browne and Millard, but it would not last long. A hearing was scheduled for the end of the month, but in a dramatic change of events, Bundy, already in the courtroom and about to be heard by Judge Edward Cowart, changed his mind. An exhausted and, according to Browne, "somewhat crazy" looking Bundy suddenly declared, "I'm not going to do it."

Millard resigned, frustrated that his time was being wasted. Browne decided to take one last attempt to counsel Bundy. However, Bundy pleaded not guilty to the murders



and the trial was transferred to Miami, as the job of finding an impartial jury in Tallahassee was near impossible. It was almost a year until Bundy would fall under the spotlight once again in June 1979 for his Miami trial, and although Browne felt after his plea bargain had been turned down that he would no longer have any contact with Bundy, he was called to be both a state witness and a defence witness at the trial.

Before his testimony, Browne visited his former client in his cell in Dade County Jail. What happened next, according to Browne, was completely out of the blue. "He was lying on the cell floor and he looked up at me and said, 'John, I want to be a good person, I'm just not'." Such a comment from Bundy, who by now was the most notorious serial killer in the USA, shocked Browne. "For Ted to acknowledge that he was not a good person was very unusual for a sociopath. It might have been a manipulative statement made to me to get me to care more about him, because I pretty much withdrew from his case after he turned down the plea bargain, but I do believe it was sincere. He was on the floor crying. I think that he was at the point where he had lost complete control."

The pair continued to talk and Bundy confessed that his attitude towards his victims had been more about control than sex. "He told me he would stalk women and decide that he would exercise his power and compassion by not attacking them," Browne said. Another shocking revelation was that Bundy confessed to killing more than 100 people, one of them being a male. Such an event had happened when Bundy was only a teenager; it was a game of sexual exploration that turned deadly. But in a flash, Bundy's solemn and melancholy moment had passed and he went back to being his usual self. "I believe a small part of Ted knew he was evil, and that may have been one of the reasons he turned down the plea bargain to save his life that I obtained."

Bundy's argument in the pre-trial hearing was that none of his confessions alluding to the murders could be deemed viable because he was in a psychotic state of mind. In a somewhat controversial move, Cowart suppressed potentially vital evidence, including Browne's testimony of his phone conversation with Bundy before he was arrested for murder in Florida. He suppressed any evidence attesting to Bundy's state of mind that night. Bundy's Utah arrest and the items found in his car were also deemed inadmissible. However, forensic odontologist Richard Souviron distinguished Bundy's teeth as the set that had left an impression on the left buttock of Chi Omega sorority sister Levy. He said no one other than Bundy could have made them.

## THE MIAMI TRIAL

After a week devoted to selecting a jury, Bundy stood accused of murder in the first degree, attempted first-degree murder and burglary, and the Florida High Court ruled that the trial be televised across the nation. Although Bundy had five defence attorneys, he insisted he represent himself at trial. But evidence against him, even without the confessions and Utah arrest, still amounted to a guilty outlook. Testimonies from students Connie Hastings and Nita Neary placed Bundy in the vicinity of the sorority house the night of the attack. Neary pointed to Bundy with a quivering finger when asked by the state if she could see the man she had witnessed sneaking out of Chi Omega after the murders. Asked to verbally identify him, Bundy chipped in, breaking the stern silence in the courtroom. "That's Mr Bundy," he answered, referring to himself in the third person. "Thank



you, Mr Bundy," the judge replied. Bundy responded almost immediately, "You're welcome." Although the defence objected to the prosecution's tactics, Neary spoke up: "I've had to go over this again and again and again in my mind. And I feel positive in my identification."

After seven hours of deliberation, a verdict was reached. The jury found the defendant guilty of capital murder, leaving Cowart to sentence Bundy to death by electrocution. In his parting words, Cowart told the serial killer, "Take care of yourself young man. I say that to you sincerely; take care of yourself, please. It is an utter tragedy for this court to see such a total waste of humanity as I've experienced in this courtroom. You're a bright young man. You would have made a good lawyer and I would have loved to have you practice in front of me, but you went another way, partner."

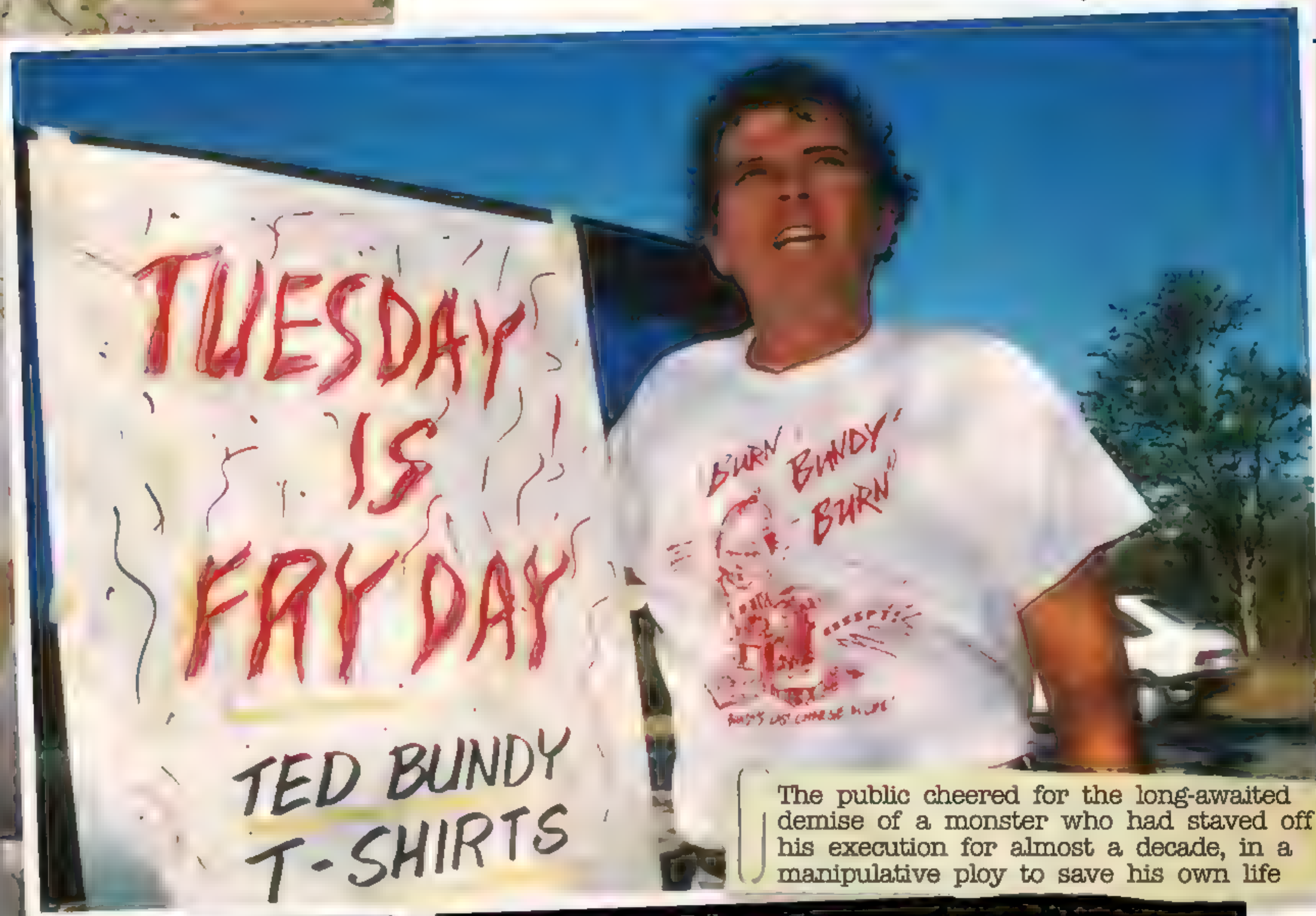
## TAKE A BOW

On 7 January 1980, Bundy was back in court, this time to face trial for the killing of his final victim. Bundy pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. Once again finding an impartial jury in the county where Leach had been killed was extremely difficult, and therefore the trial was moved to Orlando. Presiding over the court was Judge Wallace Jopling. Evidence in this case was much stronger than previous trials: credit card receipts proved Bundy had been in the area, and a fireman testified he had seen Bundy leading a young girl into

**ABOVE** Shortly before he was executed and stretchered off, Bundy talked about how he committed at least 70 murders across the US. He provided FBI agents with hard evidence of at least 16 murders

**“ HE WAS LYING ON THE CELL FLOOR AND HE LOOKED UP AT ME AND SAID, ‘JOHN, I WANT TO BE A GOOD PERSON, I’M JUST NOT’ ”**





The public cheered for the long-awaited demise of a monster who had staved off his execution for almost a decade, in a manipulative ploy to save his own life

## "TUESDAY IS FRY DAY"

GLEEFUL FLORIDIANS GATHERED OUTSIDE THE PRISON WHILE INSIDE, A DISTINCTLY LESS CONFIDENT BUNDY PREPARED TO MEET HIS MAKER

On the morning of 24 January 1989, Bundy was strapped to the electric chair; a condemned man, his time was up. Browne recalled how, "Florida was just a frenzy. The conservative rednecks were frying bacon to sound like the electric chair." Meanwhile a small group of anti-death penalty protesters gathered outside the gates of Florida's Starke State prison.

Despite numerous appeals, requests for stays of execution and an attempt to drip feed information on his victim's whereabouts in return for his own life, Bundy was given his last meal. He denied a 'special meal' and therefore was given the traditional dish of medium-rare steak, eggs, hash browns, toast, milk, coffee, juice, butter and jelly. But it remained untouched. Instead he spent his final night weeping and praying with his Methodist minister, Fred Lawrence. Gone was the confidence he had once displayed in court, his dark and distinctive hair had been shaved, leaving a glistening bald patch where it once was. Oil was applied to the skin to enhance the work of the 2,000 volts of electricity that would soon be coursing through his body. Strapped in, his piercing eyes searched for familiar faces that sat behind the glass. 42 witnesses had gathered including the men who had prosecuted him and the families of his victims. Superintendent Tom Barton asked Bundy if he had any last words. After a brief pause, Bundy, referring to one of his lawyers and his minister, said: "Jim and Fred, I'd like you to give my love to my family and friends." Final words uttered, the last strap was pulled tight across his chin and the metal cap was bolted in place. The black curtain closed and Bundy disappeared from view as the executioner flipped the switch. Bundy's body clenched, his fists tightened and a minute later the switch was flipped again, ending the surge of electricity momentarily while a doctor checked him over. Underneath Bundy's blue shirt his heart had stopped; a light was shone into his eyes but the lights inside were finally out. At 7.16am, the nightmare for many was over, as Bundy was pronounced dead.

a white van that had been parked outside Leach's school the day she disappeared. Fibres from Leach's clothes were found in the van Bundy had rented and on his own clothes. While a physician testified as to the unnatural position Leach's decomposed body had been found in, Bundy doodled on a yellow pad, seemingly uninterested in the case. His defence counsel did all they could to discredit witnesses, claiming that the sensational media had tainted the defendant.

It was during this trial that Bundy made one of his final shocking moves, when he proposed to Carole Anne Boone, his on-off girlfriend who he had met in 1974. She had moved to Florida to be with him, and was in the middle of testifying on his behalf during the penalty phase of the trial when he popped the question. According to Florida law, if a couple declare themselves man and wife in a court of law and in front of a judge, then they are legally wed. His marital status did little to prevent his conviction. He was found guilty and sentenced for a third time to die in the electric chair.

When asked what the hardest part of defending Bundy was, Browne said, "Dealing with his self-destructive behaviour. Ted would do self-destructive things like represent himself and make a fool out of himself."

"There are so many sides to Ted that people find interesting," Browne continued. "Firing all his lawyers, representing himself, getting married to his wife in court – doing that in front of a judge, which made their marriage legal – and the fact that he most likely conceived a child while in maximum security."

For almost a decade, Bundy tried to appeal his death sentence, but each time it was thrown out, and his execution was scheduled for 24 January 1989. "I didn't believe that people were born evil," said Browne, who refused to be at his former client's execution, "until I met Ted Bundy."



# THE BIRTH OF EVIL

## RICHARD RAMIREZ

SATANISM, FAMILY, RAPE, MURDER AND JESUS: WHAT FORCES DROVE RICHARD RAMIREZ? WHERE DID THE TROUBLED CHILD END AND THE SERIAL-KILLING NIGHT STALKER BEGIN?

**W**hat is evil? Evil would seem to be the life of Ricardo 'Richard' Ramirez, convicted murderer of 13 people and self-styled Satanist. In spite of his Catholic upbringing, he took to robbing, raping and mutilating his way around America.

Richard Ramirez's life was destined to be one of extremes. He was born to Julian, a poor Mexican from a farming family, and Mercedes, an American citizen who lived with Julian in Mexico for a time. Living in the Mexican/American border town of El Paso, from the very beginning the American Dream of happiness, health, safety and prosperity was dangled like a crucifix in front of the Ramirez family's eyes: believe and be rewarded. Unfortunately, though, it was always just out of their reach, along with their access to the blessings granted by its governmental authorities, be they of the immigration laws of the prosperous country or the supposed powers of their church. This led to a sense of eternal frustration for Richard's family. They were at the mercy of a system that stalked them even as they tried to exercise their supposed right to move up the ranks of society.


Julian, Richard's father, was extremely hard working but lacked an education, while his wife came from 'better stock' and expected a little more of the unearned privilege of bounty. He placed his faith primarily on the notions of tradition and honour, she on the justice of Jesus Christ, a figure omnipresent even today, decked out in gold in the slums of the country. As Julian found jobs to support his family over the border, immigration police intervened and dumped the family back into desperation, leaving Julian

to defend their meagre possessions against bandits, while his wife was forced to trudge back across the perimeter. Nevertheless, while Jesus stood silent, the parents were determined and they worked and whirled in increasing circles on their way to a better future. 'Circles' was, sadly, the operative word; in a cruel twist of fate, the couple's home in El Paso lay in the path of mighty winds from Los Alamos, New Mexico, where the US government were testing nuclear weapons. Several of the children were born with disabilities like Collier's disease, which causes the bones to grow in curves and prevents movement. The family were stationed at hospital beds through the blazing summers. Despite their close-knit nature in times of illness, the friction was fractious and hampered their future success before they'd even started.

Richard was to decide, based in part on these formative experiences, that what the Lord wouldn't give, he, Richard, would taketh anyway.

The sign of cross alone is not enough to help a gaggle of squalling kids, and the Ramirez household was built on tried, tested and, some may say, exhausted family values. If Richard or any of his other siblings misbehaved, Julian would thrash them. These were not the taps of a tough father, but the belt-borne wallops of a man who was forced by his circumstances





"you don't understand me, you are not expected  
to, you are not capable, i am beyond your  
experience, i am beyond good and evil, lucifer  
dwells in all of us. i love to kill people, i love to  
watch them die, i would shoot them in the head  
and they would wiggle and squirm all over the  
floor and then just stop, or i would cut them  
with a knife and watch their faces turn red  
while i love all that blood"

richard ramirez





ABOVE At 13, Ramirez witnessed a murder that proved formative to his young mind

RIGHT Ramirez was keeping dark company when this family photo was taken



to work in physically demanding jobs that upset his psyche. Working on the railroad, for instance, gave him honour, but separated him from his family, giving him a ferocious temper. He felt he would get his just desserts when his children made him proud and carried on his family name, but for all Mercedes tried to be the perfect and dutiful wife, they were not favoured by the American god. Despite her prayers, his tempers came. The kids learned to be nimble to get away, but Richard did more than that: Richard danced.

Richie, as he was known, had not been like the other children. He was the baby, he was doted on by his older sister, Ruth, and unlike his older brothers, he was not much of a rabble rouser. He was a handsome, quick-witted child who loved to escape in the beat of his own imagination. Even as a baby, he would wiggle his body to the music and would go on to drive babysitters mad with his constant mental and physical action. This would not have been such a problem, but for the circumstances the Ramirez family found themselves in.

Having finally gained visas, they were able to escape to America and live among other poor Mexican immigrants in a community rife with drugs. Thus, happy Richie was dabbling in dope by the time he was ten, copying his older

siblings, much to the anger of their strict father. Julian enjoyed physical labour and his muscular body was blessed by work, but would nonetheless become motionless at home. There were, however, occasions where he could not bend the objects bestowed on him (through work) to his will and he would terrify his family by repeatedly and rhythmically beating at his own head with a hammer if something as minor as a bit of home DIY went against him. Mercy-seeking Mercedes would turn away to 'Jesu' while her children ran and cowered in terror.

Richie took to sleeping in a local graveyard, finding it more peaceful than at home. He even found the visions of monsters he experienced there fascinating (unlike the fearsome man back home), not realising they were the likely indicators of grand mal epilepsy, which would lead to his bitter eventual exclusion from a school football team. He thought these visions were either messengers or messages; divine intervention from beyond, a sign that he had been chosen.

Deliverance was, however, not the standard life path for Mexican immigrant families, and while they had to shift for themselves, there was an increasing feeling that they shouldn't have to work their fingers to the bone to achieve a decent life. As such, Richie's older sibling began to find himself in trouble. Reuben earned a beating from their belligerent father after being caught stealing a car, and the children grew increasingly resentful of their mentally and physically absent parent. Richie, too, began to fall away, running off into a world of his own – much to the delight of his mother, who saw it as sign of an active imagination.

**“THESE WERE POLAROID PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE REMOVED HEADS OF VIETNAMESE WOMEN HE HAD FORCED TO FELLATE HIM”**





What Richie needed was direction. Sadly, the local school master was said to be rather more keen to give his students sexual gratification than guidance or sterling tutoring. Forward thrust was, however, provided by the older boys in the community, who would steal cars, sneak-burgle houses and smoke crack. This was true of boys like Richie's older cousin Miguel, known as Mike. It was Mike who became (as Richie's father would proclaim) a True American Hero by fighting in God's name in Vietnam. The name in which Mike served was, however, more like Satan than then Lamb. He became no less than Satan's 'fence'. He had beaten death by surviving ambushes against the odds, but also bought into the aspects of the Dream that involved the demonisation of enemies and the right of the self to succeed at all costs.

A strong, powerful figure of a man with an insistent personality, Mike took Richie under his wing and would regale him with stories of triumph, evidenced by the trophies of his successes. These 'trophies' were not military medals, but Polaroid photographs of the removed heads of Vietnamese women whom he had forced to fellate him, then killed. He would also show Richie how providing for oneself was a personal pillow of safety, how he'd retained a trunk of shrunken heads gained during that war that he professed to having slept on for his own comfort. Such tales, lurid as they are, were not unheard of in the Vietnamese conflict and photographs of similar atrocities, including necklaces made from human body parts, circulate to this day. Holding life and proof of death in one's hands was seen as symbolic of power. It was considered an understandable (if undiscussed) side

effect of war, particularly given that humankind is prone to demonise that which we can't understand.

As a boy of burgeoning adolescence, it is not surprising that Richie's sexuality began to weave together with images of sex and violence, courtesy of his cousin-idol. This was only reiterated when Mike simply shot his wife, Jessie, in the face at point blank range in front of little Richie for the crime of standing her ground. She had been nagging him for dwelling on his war stories rather than looking for a fresh start. Richie did as he was told by Mike and looked the other way, as did the court, which rewarded his war hero cousin by sending him to serve his sentence in hospital, rather than prison.

The younger lad was not granted this lucky escape. He was returned to the scene of the crime with his father to pick up the trinkets the dead woman had left behind. He was there to witness his father finding the bullet casing that destroyed her brain, and his head was filled with the heady sights of a room still stuffy with the tonic of dry blood. Richie, in many ways, stayed locked in that room forever.

Mike was back on the streets, dealing drugs and schooling his cousin in stealth burgle (avoiding gravel and finding the open windows), within just eight short years. Seeing his role model rewarded with another chance because of the experiences behind his trophies led the confused Richie to wonder whether Satan was more a powerful benefactor for his believers than Christ. Shortly after, he began reading Anton LaVey's books and started to follow his very own brand of Satanism.

**ABOVE** El Paso-Juarez, Ramirez's home town, is a city that straddles the border between Mexico and the United States



The screwed up kid hit the road and split heel to Los Angeles. His older brother, Reuben, had moved there and found it to be a place rich in pickings for the robber who was able to remain undetected. Richie was enthralled, not least by the rampant sexuality on show. Here there were not Hail Marys but hookers (as he saw them) on street corners, and he became a regular at the 'XXX' shops stocking hard core sadomasochistic porn that emphasised the subordination of women. With violence and power irrevocably fused in his psyche, the inevitable escalation into physical crime was first evidenced by the assault of a woman he'd watched from afar. It was the beginning of the reign of The Night Stalker.

As far as Richie was concerned, if God was not going to give him what he felt his family deserved, he would dance with the devil. It is not clear whether he viewed this Satan in the very physical way his mother perceived her Jesus, or as an ideal that could condone his violent visions, approve of his worship of heavy metal music and sanctify his superiority and sadism. Either way, Richie decided he wanted to achieve through evil, finding that its supposed mores fit more with what felt like his outré but honest nature.

His killings began on 27 June 1984 and would become a pattern. He would dress in black and use the cover of night and the freeway to grant him anonymity. He would stalk strangers. It led to his moniker, The Night Stalker. Breaking into their homes, he would kill the men, sexually assault the women, sodomise the children, once daubing Satanic symbols across the walls and the body of one of his victims.

He was nailed to the crimes partly thanks to his belief that Satan would obscure him from public view, partly thanks to his boogie shoes: he was linked to footprints left by his sneakers, after which his face and descriptions were splashed across the mass media and a mob came baying for his blood.

Ramirez was convicted of killing 13 people, but what also caught the nation's attention were his court appearances.



A police artist's impression of Ramirez was issued, but his circulated mugshot was what eventually led to his capture on 30 Aug 1985

## “THE INEVITABLE ESCALATION INTO PHYSICAL CRIME WAS FIRST EVIDENCED BY THE ASSAULT OF A WOMAN HE'D WATCHED FROM AFAR”

Following in the footsteps of Satanic leader and ex-carnival worker Anton LaVey, he would at one moment display his so-called inner evil, yelling at the judge and displaying a primitive pentagram inked on his clawed hand while flashing a rakish grin. At other times, he would argue that his trial was unsound. This statuesque man was accused of some of the most nauseating crimes it is possible to commit, yet he apparently loved this tango with the media, which he used to exploit his chivalrous side. And he did have one. This is a man, after all, who broke up with a former girlfriend rather than pressure or force her into engaging in acts she



## UNHOLY UNION

IN 1996, A FREELANCE JOURNALIST MARRIED RICHARD RAMIREZ. WHAT WOULD PROMPT SOMEONE TO MARRY A KILLER?

Doreen Lioy was a perfectly normal woman until she fell for the razor-cheeked and charismatic Ramirez, stating that she “Saw something in his eyes, something that captivated me” when his mugshot was shown in an advertising break in the middle of Dallas. It is a phenomena discussed in Sheila Isenberg's book, *Women Who Love Men Who Kill*. According to Isenberg, jail house romances often start owing to a shared history of abuse that induces the need for intimacy complicated by the fear of its actualisation. The convict will come into contact with the romantic partner as a result of the case, often with the partner being a prison warden or nurse. Lioy, on the other hand, was a Ramirez groupie – she saw him on television during his trial and started to write to him. The emotional intensity of the situation coupled with the enforced separation helps fantasy to flourish, sustaining the relationship – as the unbelieving overtones of Doreen's description of Richard stated, “To me he's as beautiful inside as he is outside”.



Lioy, outside San Quentin prison: “I'm ecstatically happy today and very, very proud to... be his wife.”



"When I was 11 I had an episode in my life. I saw my cousin shoot his wife. It wasn't traumatic... but the shock value. I went back into the apartment to collect some things with my dad, because my cousin was in jail. The bed was all bloody. It was there where she had bled after the bullet. She got a 38 to the face. At the same time it was very... uh. The stillness of the room, the eeriness, you know. We had to open the windows to ventilate the room and it was something. It was... (long pause)... it was death! I had known the woman. I had known her very well. I went into the living room and saw her purse. I looked through her purse, saw her ID cards and her things. It was a strange feeling. That was the first time I ever ran across death. Ever since, I was intrigued."

richard ramirez







**ABOVE** Having been charged with killing a 65-year-old man, Ramirez leaves court to face a further 16 counts of murder another day

**RIGHT** "Normal, ordinary people do not think like a serial killer. They have no conception of what is going on in a killer's mind."

was uncomfortable with. While this may sound an obvious moral choice, particularly to the modern reader, the notion of conjugal rights – the expectation of sexual activity between partners – is still somewhat embedded within many societies.

Of key interest in terms of his actual nature is an interview with reporter Mike Watkiss while he was in custody. In it, Ramirez appears to conflate a basic sense of narcissistic showmanship in delivering pre-prepared speeches with his expression of philosophical theories about why he committed his crimes. While sometimes stating that he would not answer questions about his beliefs, he immediately 'established' himself as an expert on them with the phrase, "I can tell you a little bit about Satanism". Then, in one breath, he stated: "A Satanist admits to being evil... We are all evil in some form or another, are we not? [...] Yes, I am evil. Not 100 per cent, but I am evil." This would seem to suggest he saw evil not simply as choosing to be amoral or being completely amoral by nature or indeed even being cruel (and immoral), but having the capacity to behave in what would be considered an amoral way some of the time. The sheer capacity for all human beings to act in what could be considered an amoral manner some of the time in the context of his argument therefore suggests he saw himself simply as more 'evil' than the average person. This explains one of his further comments, "Killing is killing, whether done for profit or fun. Men murder themselves into this democracy". The basic comparison he uses here literally suggests that by stripping the details of how the killing is committed – the 'how evil' they are – from the deaths, the act of killing

becomes ultimately similarly amoral, something done as a means to an end that may (in circumstances such as the Vietnam war that his cousin was involved in) be considered understandable, if not necessarily laudable. This explains his statement, "Evil has always existed. The perfect world most people seek shall never come to pass. And it's gonna get worse", purely on the basis that the vile actions will continue to be committed.

The distinction between his philosophy and Satanism itself can be seen in his phrases, "A Satanist admits to being evil" and "we gain the courage to rebaptise our evil qualities as being our best qualities". By referring to the particularly Christian concept of Baptism (and particularly remembering Richie Ramirez was raised as a staunch Catholic), he is talking instead about trying to be bad rather than simply not judging behaviours. Most modern branches of Satanism aim to enable the believer to achieve their true desires and escape the unnecessarily constraining shackles of supposedly conventional morality, rather than trying to be cruel for the sake of it. Ramirez was many things, but he was not a Satanist in the true, modern sense of the term.

He used the idea of evil to justify the way it was easier for him to live considering his potential mental and physical health diagnosis. Quite simply, being considered 'evil' gave him a level of recognition, and indeed fame, that is a practical inversion of the American Dream, an ideal to which he was subscribed but could not participate. As a result, like serial killers such as Edmund Kemper, it could be argued that he chose to use the obvious intelligence suggested by





## SATANISM OR SENSATIONALISM?

MUSICIAN, PRESENTER AND SATANIST JOHNNY DOOM OFFERS INSIGHT INTO RAMIREZ'S HEADLINE-GRABBING BELIEFS

**What aspect of Anton LaVey's writings do you think might have resonated with the young Richard Ramirez?**

Given his traumatic childhood, I imagine Ramirez would have found empowerment and some sort of justification for the dark and sadistic thoughts he was cultivating through isolation, sharing gruesome stories with his cousin and harbouring power and control fantasies.

**How much of Ramirez's actions/words can be linked explicitly to Satanism?**

Some of Ramirez' words and actions relate to themes in The Satanic Bible (the idea that humans are beyond good and evil...borrowed from Nietzsche) which would have helped him justify his sadism, yet LaVey was in the process of making his brand of Satanism audience-friendly in order to appeal to a more mainstream following. LaVey did not advocate murder, sadism or abuse of women or children. He could understand it, but he did not advocate it in any of his work.

**If Ramirez went wrong in his interpretation, where did he go wrong?**

It's impossible to say he went 'wrong' in his application of Satanic ideas, because although LaVey had set out personal guidelines for what he believed to be the main Satanic rules, he also in no way wanted control of individuals or overly specified how you should act. It is about individual responsibility for your actions.

It sounds like Ramirez may have been one of those folk who believed in an anthropomorphic Satan. A real devil figure watching over him... that's always a tell tale sign that they have slipped from LaVey's teachings. LaVey didn't believe in Lucifer as an entity. He was a humanist who believed in exercising the dark nature of humanity. I suppose he used Biblical terms like Lucifer in ritual though, so Ramirez might have got confused.

**Do you accept Ramirez' definition of himself as a Satanist?**

I'm not sure I'd call him a LaVeyan Satanist per se, as LaVey seemed to discourage abuse of others for your own sadistic pleasure. He (in keeping with the time) focused on personal liberation and a sense of not allowing people to take advantage of you rather than violently attacking them, which he would have deemed un-Satanic.

Ramirez, to me, sounds like somebody who used Satanism as a justification of his sadistic and barbaric thoughts that had built up over the course of his abusive childhood, his troubled teens and allowed him to feel as though the more 'animalistic' and post-Christian ideals (beyond right and wrong) could be justified by the symbolism of Satanism.

**"FACED WITH THE SILENT HOLY FATHER, RATHER THAN A RELIABLE FATHER FIGURE, THEY COMPOSED THEIR OWN MORALITY"**

his vocabulary in phrases such as "[Satanism] is undefiled wisdom instead of hypocritical self deceit. It is power without charity" to leverage what little power he could, even if only over the person conducting a seven minute television interview. He was determined to be seen not only as a someone, but as a prophet for his particular and peculiar strand of Satanic belief and all that might entail.

Richard Ramirez spent his life spinning between feelings of defiance towards the God he felt would shun him and deference to the ideas of the American Dream he believed God would bestow on the worthy. His early childhood was a liturgy of his parents' prayers that their hard work would be rewarded, all the while they flailed against further and further setbacks over time, owing to their health, nationality and background. Richie and his siblings coped as best they could, but often faced with the silent Holy Father, rather than a reliable father figure, they composed their own morality.

Richie's fused tales of war heroes with his own fevered, epileptic visions to give him the stark view of a world where success was only possible for him in infamy. The result was The Night Stalker, a character who could only dance to the beat of his own drum – the band leader he was looking for was never there to begin with.

The Night Stalker died from cancer five years after his San Quentin prison mugshot was taken, in California's Marin General Hospital





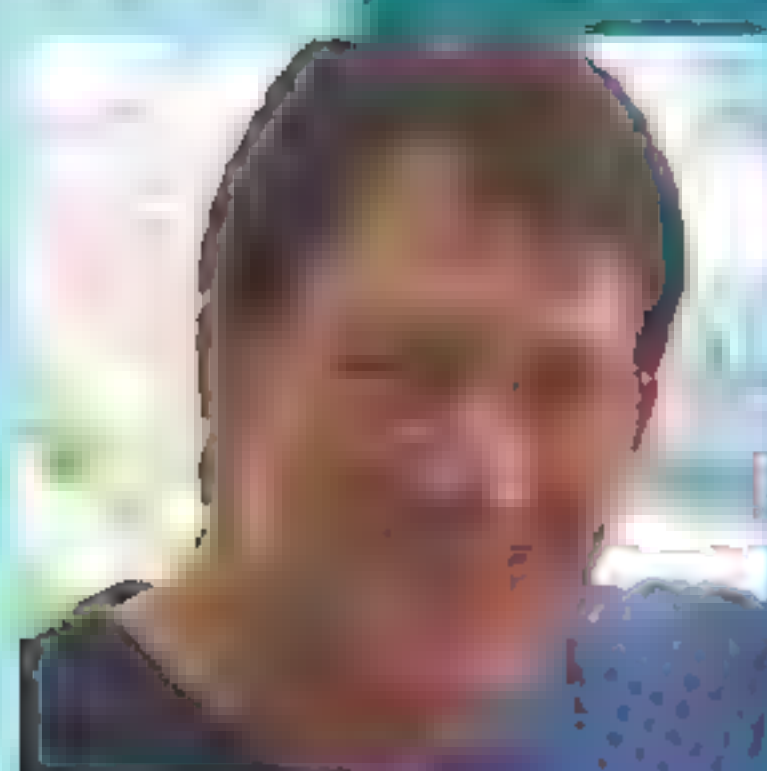


# COLD BLOODED KILLER

RICHARD KUKLINSKI HAS BEEN IMMORTALISED IN HOLLYWOOD AS A BONA-FIDE MAFIA HIT MAN WHO MURDERED PEOPLE FOR MONEY AND FOR HIS OWN ENJOYMENT. WHAT MIND SET DOES IT TAKE TO BE A CONTRACT KILLER — AND DOES BEING A PSYCHOPATH HELP?

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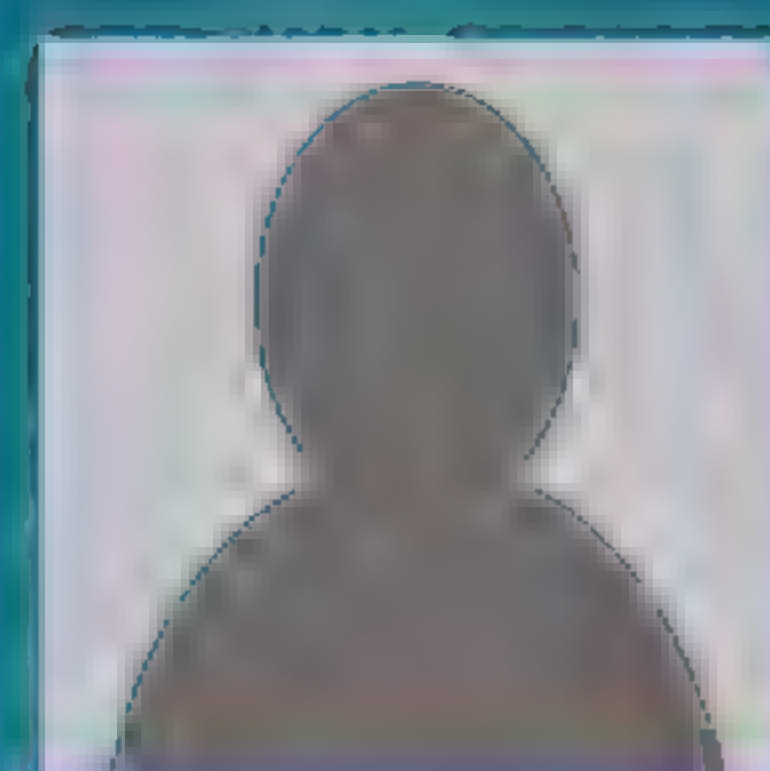
**STEPHEN J. GIANNANGELO**

Retired Illinois investigator and criminal psychologist Giannangelo most recently wrote *Real-Life Monsters: A Psychological Examination Of The Serial Murderer* (2012).



**DOMINICK POLIFRONE**

Polifrone is a former Alcohol Tobacco Firearms (ATF) agent who worked undercover, and famously brought 'the Iceman' Richard Kuklinski to justice in a 15-month operation.



**ED SCARPO**

Ed (a pseudonym) runs prominent mob news site [www.cosanostranews.com](http://www.cosanostranews.com) as a one-man effort. He has a background in print journalism with over 20 years' experience.



In the 1970s, locals said that New Jersey had way more Mafia guys than New York. Jersey was infested with mob activity as a litany of associates, hangers-on and wannabes emulated what they'd seen in *The Godfather*. It was death before dishonour and the criminal underworld was ripe with gangland antics, making it easy for guys with violent tendencies like Richard 'the Iceman' Kuklinski to not only get in to the life, but to thrive within it. Because the FBI wasn't really focused on the mob back then – and when it was, the feds concentrated on big name Mafioso – killers like the Iceman had a sort of free rein, a proverbial licence to kill. And in cold-blooded fashion, Kuklinski carved a niche for himself in the East Coast's Mafiadom.

"I think the type most often described as cold blooded is a psychopathic or sociopathic personality, someone who has no remorse, no feelings or guilt, empathy, or any aversion to violence," criminal psychologist Stephen J Giannangelo, a retired state of Illinois Criminal Investigator and prominent author, told **Real Crime**.

"The predatory nature of a psychopath, the cold-bloodedness acts in concert with a certain amount of patience and manipulateness, and often intelligence – that makes them good at what they do. A successful hit man is someone who can do it for 30 years like a Kuklinski, rather than someone caught in the early stages of their careers."

For people like Kuklinski, who have often experienced extreme violence in their childhoods, that sort of behaviour becomes normal to them, and is the only way they know how to deal with anything. This makes them more equipped for the job as a hit man. By the 1980s, Kuklinski was one of the most feared hit men in the state of New Jersey and nobody could control him. He was a loose cannon who did what he wanted and killed at will. If someone disrespected him, they were dead – plain and simple. He took hits by the dozens, but he also killed for the pure enjoyment of it. He was just a violent, violent guy.

"I think Kuklinski is one of the few hit men that I would say crossed over into the realm of a full-blown serial killer," Giannangelo said. "Researchers and FBI nowadays include many multiple murder offenders in their statistics as serial murderers without much regard for motivation. But some, mainly those more oriented towards the psychological angle of study, still look at serial killers as those who kill for a reason, a need. Kuklinski continued to kill for far more reasons than a guy who was paid well and lived the good life; he killed because he loved it."

He was under the radar for a long time until he made a crucial error. After killing Louis Masgay, Kuklinski kept his body in a freezer for two years before finally deciding to dump the body in Rockland County, New York. Masgay was wrapped in plastic bags and still wearing the clothes he had on when he disappeared two years earlier. When police found the body, Masgay looked like he had been dead for a week. The deep freeze masked the time of death, giving the Iceman his name. But things didn't work out as planned.

"When they did the autopsy, they indicated reversal decomposition that began externally rather than internally, and they found ice crystals in the tissues when the body was discovered in August or September, which is hot," retired Alcohol Tobacco Firearms (ATF) agent Dominick Polifrone told **Real Crime**. "He made the cops look like jerks. He told me, 'Dom, you know I wrapped him up and I had him in there for two years in the freezer and he didn't even decompose, he looked like he died yesterday and he had the same clothes on for two years.'"



A mugshot of the Iceman after his arrest in 1982. Kuklinski considered this a minor inconvenience, but for the police it was a step towards nailing the hitman

## HIT MAN OR PSYCHOPATH?

Keeping bodies in the freezer was something straight out of Jeffrey Dahmer's playbook. Pretty scary. Most Mafia guys just want to make money, they don't want to kill people and get bloody. They don't like murder, it's a last resort. But in organised crime, guys like the Iceman were very useful.

"I think he got enjoyment out of killing," Ed Scarpo from *Cosa Nostra News* told **Real Crime**. "For most Mafia guys it's just about pushing a button or pulling a trigger. They don't think about it. It's just what they have to do. Usually they don't even know the guy. They don't even know why he's the guy getting killed or who wants it done. But Kuklinski, he liked to get his hands dirty. He liked to feel the guy die."

Kuklinski was a full-blown psychopath – or, more accurately, a sociopath if we are to believe he was just a product of a horrific upbringing of poverty, violence and abuse, Giannangelo mused. "A child living in a household of violence normalises it and even thrives in it," he told **Real Crime**. "Of course, without testing, we will not know what Kuklinski's genetics might be, or if there were other biological factors regarding his development. Regarding [what Kuklinski said in interview in] the HBO Specials – that he 'felt nothing' when he killed – he didn't feel anything. Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer needed alcohol to commit many of their murders. Kuklinski had no such inhibitions to overcome. He enthusiastically tortured animals as a child and, as found significant by researchers of human-to-animal violence, he enjoyed the torture of animals normally regarded as pets like dogs and cats, indicating a non-empathetic, sadistic, impulse-driven need for violence that precludes any feelings to disregard."

"I'd compare that to gang activity of today, where many kids are a product of their environments, where poverty and powerlessness are a breeding ground for extreme measures to escape such a life. The rewards that can come with gang activity, or, in Kuklinski's heyday, organised crime life can be

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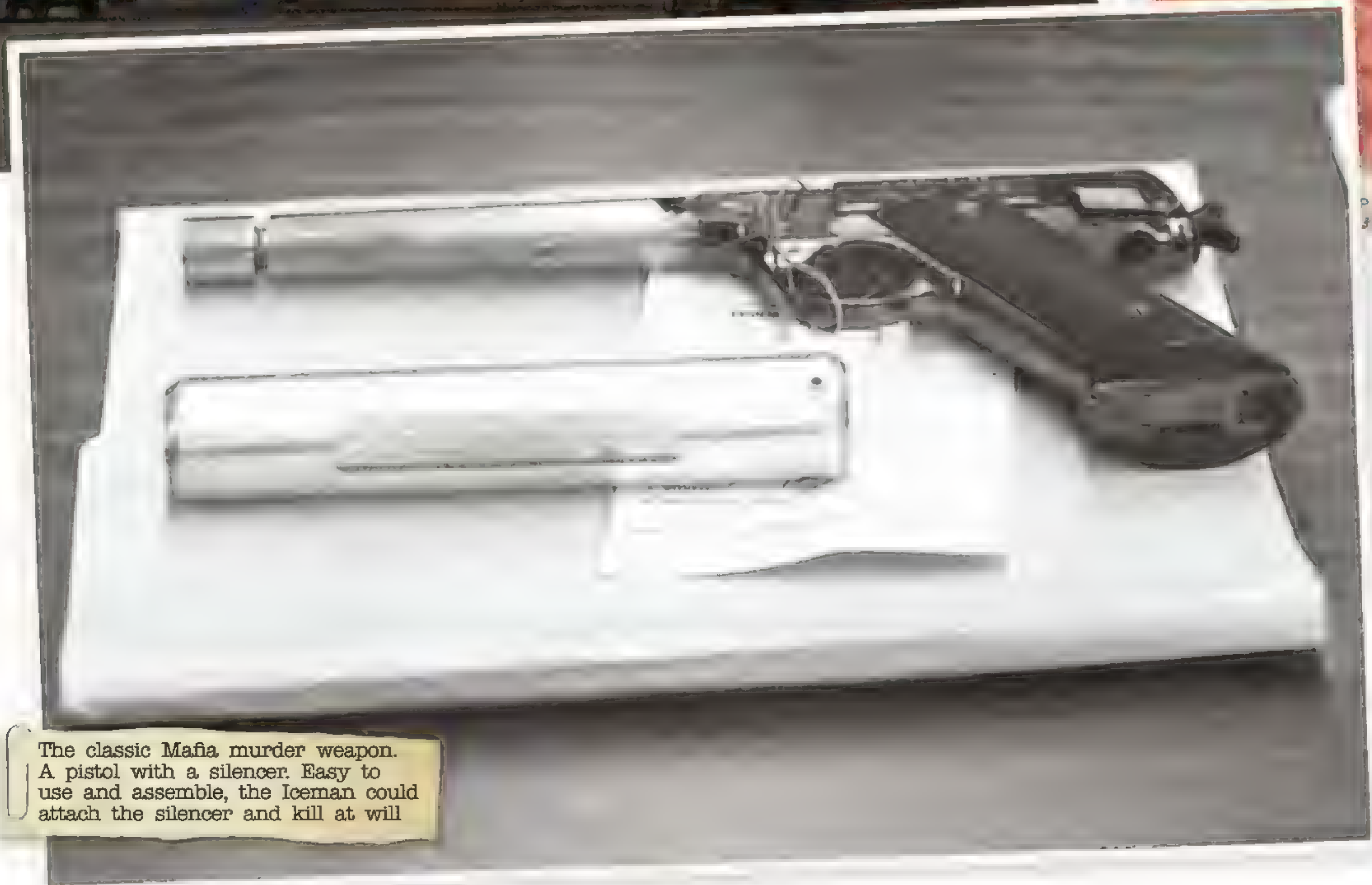
Kuklinski would kill with cyanide in broad daylight. After he gave his victim a whiff of the poison, they would fall over as if having a heart attack

**16 BUNDY AND DAHMER NEEDED ALCOHOL TO COMMIT MANY OF THEIR MURDERS. KUKLINSKI HAD NO SUCH INHIBITIONS TO OVERCOME 17**





Kuklinski made his bones in Hell's Kitchen. As a young, up-and-coming killer he honed his skills in this area



The classic Mafia murder weapon. A pistol with a silencer. Easy to use and assemble, the Iceman could attach the silencer and kill at will





voluminous: money, status, power, women. It's not hard to see how some people could eventually justify that this life is forced on them, that it's their only way to survive or succeed, and that they are convinced their circumstances are not their fault. It depends on the individual. A person I describe as a product of their environment can compartmentalise and justify their actions. They can be narcissistic and immature, and believe their own excuses. It is possible they could reflect on the damage to peoples' lives. A psychopath or a sociopath, however, could adapt, even thrive in this life with no distress to their sensibilities. There's still a narcissism and a disdain for those who live a lawful life consistent with that personality that is compatible with murder for hire. In these cases I see no toll on that sort of mind."

## TAKING DOWN THE IDEMAN

"I was called to stop by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office in New Jersey where I meet these individuals who were working on a case involving this individual by the name of Richard Kuklinski," Polifrone told **Real Crime**. "Kuklinski was meeting individuals in Bergen County and Hudson County, New Jersey, areas and then they would be disappearing, but they also alleged that there was poison involved and he liked to use pure cyanide."

Polifrone was an undercover ATF agent who was good at his job and had a ton of experience. Bergen County

prosecutors knew Kuklinski was a killer but they couldn't prove it. He was just too good at his job, but so was Polifrone. He infiltrated a wise guy joint in Patterson, New Jersey, and started making inroads there, becoming known as the guy who could acquire anything. With the federal government at his back, Polifrone could be anyone he wanted to be.

"They had been investigating him for several years and they had a lot of circumstantial evidence but no direct evidence," Polifrone said. "There were a lot of cracks in the case. They wanted to charge him for the particular murders and they needed an undercover agent with a lot of experience to find out details. They had information that these guys met Kuklinski and then disappeared, but there were no eyewitnesses or anything to what took place.

"I started hanging out at The Store in Paterson, New Jersey, where all the bad guys were. It was just like the movie *Goodfellas*, where all the bad guys would come in and they'd do their business. They had a lot of different schemes that were going on [about] where they'd plan their next heist. They'd also do large hijackings of trucks and they would distribute the booty all over the place. It took me about 15 months to get in and Kuklinski was not hanging out at this store, because he felt that a lot of people were onto him – meaning the police.

"Word was getting out that I could get anything. And after hanging out at the location for over a year the telephone rings one morning and this guy picks it up and says, 'Dom, it's the

After his 1986-arrest, Kuklinski was held on a \$2 million bond and forced to surrender his passport, as authorities believed he had large sums of money in Swiss bank accounts and a flight booked to the country

Kuklinski was a gun nut and always carried several weapons on him at a time in a holster, shoulder strap or on his ankle





## COLOMBIA'S REIGN OF TERROR:

# COCAINE KILLS

**PART 4 OF WHY THE SMUGGLERS ARE WINNING — Starts on Page 7**

# DAILY NEWS

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Thursday, December 18, 1986



# Nancy: They deceived Ron

Page 3

# BURGER MURDER

## N.J. man held in killings of 5 with gun & cyanide

**Story on page 2**



# HASENFUS IS FREE

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega as he handed over gunrunner Eugene Hasenfus (left) to Sen. Christopher Dodd (right) in Managua yesterday. At far right is prisoner's wife, Sally. Hasenfus will arrive home today and may be summoned before congressional committees investigating the Contragate scandal. **Page 5**

big guy. He wants to know if he can meet with you at the Dunkin' Donuts in Paterson, New Jersey.' When I got there he wore these tinged glasses and when I talked to him it was like he was reaching out to grab my soul and control me.

“He says to me, ‘Can you get pure cyanide?’ I’m saying to myself, ‘Yeah, I can get pure cyanide.’ I couldn’t believe how he was starting the conversations off. I said, ‘Yeah, I can get pure cyanide.’ I knew he also killed his main guy, that supplied him with the pure cyanide, and word was out there that I can get anything. So he felt comfortable... I told him yeah, but that it wasn’t easy.

“Later on, Kuklinski calls me. We meet at the Vince Lombardi service station. I go over a lot of scenarios that took place on how these people were found dead. Like for instance, we were talking how we murdered people. I said, ‘Rich, I kill people with guns.’ I said, ‘I don’t understand this cyanide stuff.’ He says, ‘Listen, you put this pure cyanide on food or in an inhaler where they breathe it in and he squeezes it. They breathe that in and there’s no antidote. By the time they find out what it is, they’re dead’ He says this is nice and easy. He says these police they don’t know what they’re doing. He says where there’s smoke there’s fire, but he puts a lot of smoke in front of it and they can’t get him. We started talking about how we each killed people and he was telling me very detailed stuff.

“They went to trial with this. Kuklinski pled guilty and then he was serving two life terms. His wife and kids were

The infamous hamburger topped with cyanide that killed one of the Iceman's victims got a front-page headline

## SCHOOL OF HARD HITS

THE ICEMAN WILLED TO HONE HIS SKILLS IN NEW YORK CITY'S HELL'S KITCHEN, BEFORE HE LAUNCHED ON HIS STORMY CAREER AS A MAFIA HIT MAN

in the courtroom, but once they heard the undercover tapes it was too late. They couldn't believe how he was talking and how he would murder people. I remember the judge asking him why did he do it and he said it was strictly business."

## LEADING THE DOUBLE LIFE

“They had information regarding Kuklinski that he was associated with organised crime people and he lived in an affluent area in Bergen County, New Jersey,” Polifrone told **Real Crime**. “He had a wife and two children and he had a lot of different organised crime connections that left many police departments in several states with empty leads for close to over a decade.”

Kuklinski led a double life, one at home with his family as a typical suburban husband and father, and the criminal side where he would meet the DeMeo crew boss, Roy DeMeo, at the Gemini Lounge in Brooklyn for business purposes. The Gemini Lounge was the Mafia club in Flatlands where DeMeo and his crew would cut up bodies. Jerry Capeci immortalised the crew in the book *Murder Machine*.

44 WHEN I TALKED TO HIM IT WAS LIKE HE WAS REACHING OUT TO GRAB MY SOUL AND CONTROL ME 45



“Roy DeMeo killed 64 people himself,” Polifrone said. “He was a made guy and had his own crew. DeMeo winds up dead later on and some people think Kuklinski did it. But he was an associate of all these people, they would call him out to do all these contract hits and to him it was strictly just business. You know, a day’s work.”

“Some people could say that Kuklinski exhibited doubling,” Giannangelo told **Real Crime**, “a psychological process where an individual can live two entirely different and seemingly conflicting lives separate from one another. This was a theory made popular by Robert Lifton regarding Nazi-era doctors. But Kuklinski, in my opinion, simply was participating in the compartmentalised parts of his life. His position as a vicious, high-status, feared hit man who was able to enjoy the violence, success and respect his business brought him was one major part of his life.

“The other part was his home life, where he could be the loving and protective father, who also exhibited power and violence and control. He needed to extend the intelligence he exhibited in avoiding law enforcement in the meticulous manner he did, for as long as he did. I can’t imagine the duplicity was all that difficult for him. This sort of dual life isn’t particularly unheard of with a psychopathic serial murderer. Dennis Rader, the BTK Killer, had no issues living a similar double life. He would die for his family.

“A prototypical sociopath is going to be highly defensive of his status, how he is perceived, almost to the point of paranoia. This drives a lot of his pathological need for control. The BTK Killer was known for an extreme aversion to public embarrassment and any hint of disrespect. The defence of his family is partially because he cares for them, but is just as much driven by how he is viewed, and how anyone could dare threaten someone in his circle. It should be noted, Kuklinski did seem to have a genuine concern for the effect the exposure of his criminal life had on his family, not unlike the BTK Killer and Albert DeSalvo, among others.”

## CRIMINAL CELEBRITY

“For as long as any of us can remember, people have been engrossed in stories of crime and violence,” Giannangelo told **Real Crime**. “Whether it’s Jack the Ripper or the Manson family, tales of crime and murder keep people gripped to books, magazines, TV shows and films. The stories about true crime, I think, fascinate us the most, as you feel like you could be a part of these stories. How many movies has Hollywood made about organised crime? About serial killers? Both subjects are absolute gold at the box office when done well like *The Godfather*, *Goodfellas* and *Silence of the Lambs*. Even average stories will make an awful lot of people sit and watch another TV documentary or movie. I never have an empty seat in my classes about criminal psychology and serial murder. And many are majors who, as students, have nothing to do with the subject. They just love this stuff.

“Kuklinski’s story is an amazing combination of both of these favourite genres. A man with a classic horrible home life grows to have a successful career in the Mafia as a professional hit man and takes to it to the level of a full-blown serial killer. It seems Kuklinski’s enjoyment in being interviewed and appearing in the media belies a love for the status reflective of his mind set, not unlike some high-profile serial killers.” But others think Kuklinski might have been coached, and even question the credibility of his claims.

“I think Kuklinski was mostly going for the media attention,” Ed Scarpo from *Cosa Nostra News* said, “because,





in the first HBO special, he didn't talk about the mob, just killing people. But in the next episode he started getting more specific, mentioning the mob and Roy DeMeo. I wouldn't be surprised if the producers talked to him about how the Mafia stuff was really popular and told him to drop names. Because in the first show he doesn't mention the Mafia.

"To me, Kuklinski is mostly a media invention. Those shows were really popular on HBO. In my time covering *Cosa Nostra News*, whenever someone mentions Kuklinski I think they're full of shit. One guy tried to say that Kuklinski was there when they killed Tommy DeSimone, the Joe Pesci character in *Goodfellas*."

### TRUTH OR FALSITY?

"It's not uncommon for psychopathic killers to brag and exaggerate their kills," said Giannangelo. "These are pathologically narcissistic individuals, who, once in a position to confess, lose nothing in claiming a higher status. Then there's killers like Henry Lee Lucas, who claimed hundreds of kills that were later discounted. But Lucas went on field trips and ate restaurant food eagerly provided by investigators trying to solve cold cases. Murderers have many reasons to lie about their inflated victim totals. I'm not sure if Kuklinski exaggerated anything, but he certainly would have legitimate motivations for wanting people to believe he was the most fearsome executioner alive, both in his professional life and as a criminal celebrity."

In the Iceman's biggest claim to fame, the Philip Carlo book of the same name that gave Kuklinski relevance in pop culture, nothing was corroborated. Carlo just took what Kuklinski told him in the interviews as God's honest truth. He wrote the story based on Kuklinski's words. The Carlo book really gave a lot of false credibility to Kuklinski. Not to say that he wasn't a hit man that took contracts from the mob, but his actual associations and how close he was to the Mafia and Roy DeMeo in particular has been questioned.

"Jerry Capeci wrote *Murder Machine*, the book on Roy DeMeo's crew," Scarpo said. "It was a major research piece, he talked to everybody involved with the case. Capeci does this whole book and talks to 500 or 1,000 sources, he had full access to the FBI and DEA files. But Kuklinski's name is not mentioned once in that book. There was some truth to what Kuklinski said. He had mob connections. I've heard that there was a single surveillance photo of him outside the Gemini Lounge where DeMeo was, but he was probably just trying to get a gun or something."

As his criminal celebrity status and fame grew, it seemed Kuklinski tried to say he was in on every unsolved murder. Investigators, eager to close cases, let him confess, and HBO producers, hungry for viewers, let Kuklinski tell his story the way he wanted to, embellishing his relationship with the Mafia and who he killed.

"I doubt he killed DeMeo," Scarpo told *Real Crime*. "That was a Mafia thing. That was the Gambinos that killed Roy DeMeo." And Dominick Polifrone, the undercover ATF agent who finally collared Kuklinski, doesn't believe his high body count either: "I don't believe he killed more than 100 people... I'd go as far as ten, 15 people maybe. Maybe that's about it."

AS HIS CRIMINAL CELEBRITY STATUS AND FAME GREW, IT SEEMED KUKLINSKI TRIED TO SAY HE WAS IN ON EVERY UNSOLVED MURDER

As HBO started airing the special they filmed in the prison Kuklinski resided in, he earned a measure of fame and revelled in it, sporting sunglasses like a celebrity

His family couldn't believe what came out in court. They thought their dad was in the money markets when they found out that he was actually a serial killer

## METHODS OF MURDER

MOST MAFIA HIT MEN WERE STRICTLY GUN TYPES, BUT VOLTORRE THE COMMISSIONER WANTED TO MAKE A STATEMENT OR MAKE THE HIT LOOK DIRTY. HE WOULD BE VERY INVENTIVE IN THE WAYS HE WOULD GO ABOUT KILLING PEOPLE.

### HEAD IN THE GUT

Kuklinski's most famous kill was the one that got him the most attention. It was a hit on a man named John J. "Son of Sam" Barker. Kuklinski was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done.

### ARMED AND DANGEROUS

Kuklinski's most famous kill was the one that got him the most attention. It was a hit on a man named John J. "Son of Sam" Barker. Kuklinski was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done.

### POISONED BY THE GUN

Kuklinski's most famous kill was the one that got him the most attention. It was a hit on a man named John J. "Son of Sam" Barker. Kuklinski was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done.

### PLANNED MURDER

Kuklinski's most famous kill was the one that got him the most attention. It was a hit on a man named John J. "Son of Sam" Barker. Kuklinski was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done.

### THE MURDER

Kuklinski's most famous kill was the one that got him the most attention. It was a hit on a man named John J. "Son of Sam" Barker. Kuklinski was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done. He was the one who got the job done.



BIZARRE BOB'S

# DARK DREAMHOUSE

ROBERT BERDELLA WAS KNOWN AS 'THE BUTCHER OF KANSAS CITY' FOR THE SADISTIC EXPERIMENTS HE CONDUCTED ON YOUNG MEN. HIS EXPLOITS CAME AFTER YEARS OF PENT-UP FANTASIES HE SIMPLY COULDN'T RESIST ANY LONGER

WORDS SETH FERRANTI









The story of Robert Berdella, better known as Bob, started with a naked man in a dog collar scampering down the street and ended up turning into the city's most infamous serial killer case. The 'Butcher of Kansas City' admitted to sexually molesting, torturing and killing six young homosexual men in the confines of his home. Some think there could have been more victims, but no bodies were ever found, despite the two human skulls discovered on his property. Berdella didn't start killing until 1984, but the horrible fantasies he harboured in his mind had fomented long before.

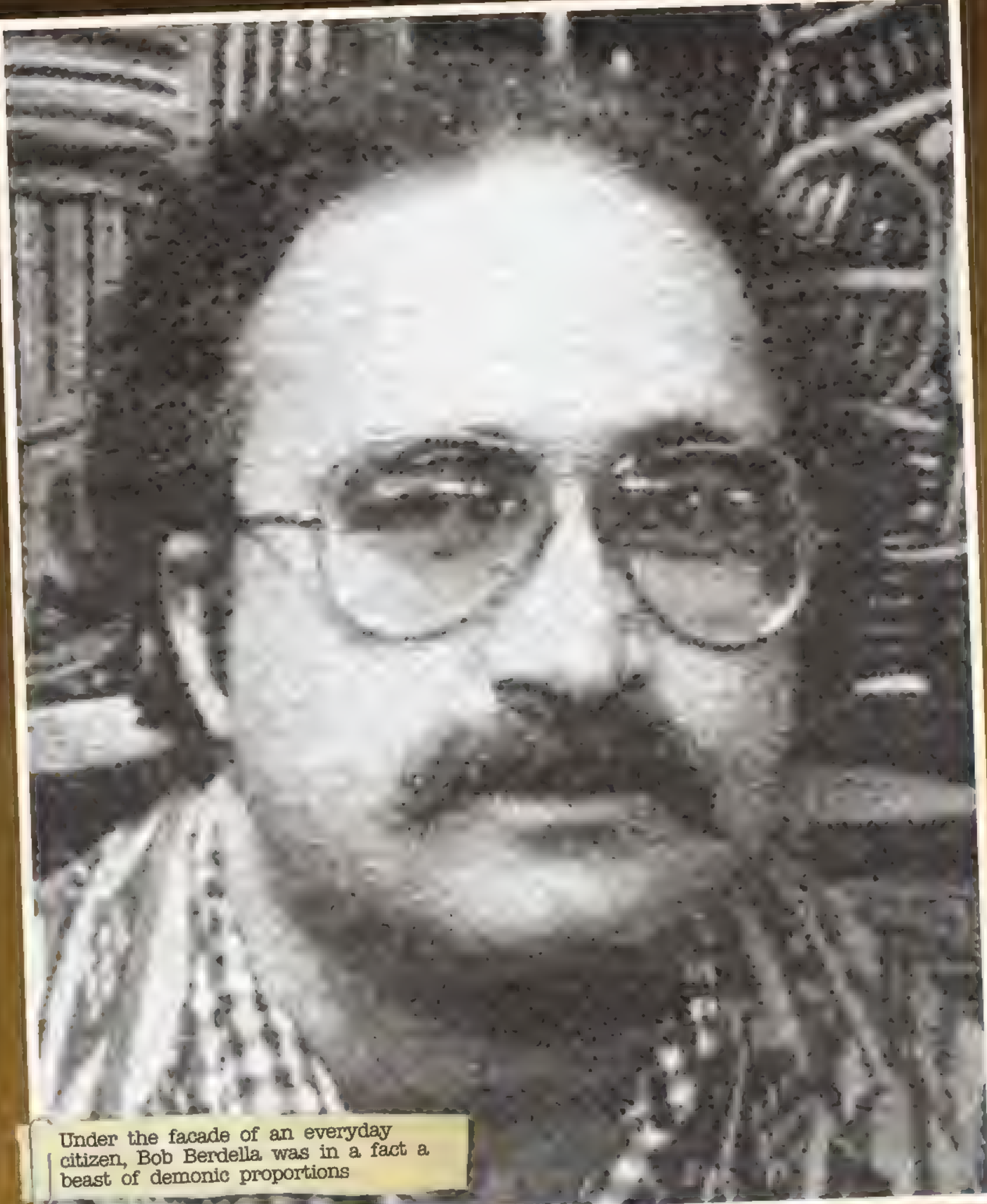
Now retired, former Kansas City Police Department (KCPD) sergeant Troy Cole began his law enforcement career with the CIA in 1968. He joined the Washington, DC Police Department in 1970 and worked as a patrolman for two years before moving to Kansas City and again working as a patrolman until 1974, when he was made a detective. He was assigned to Burglary, Homicide and Intelligence from 1974 to 1985, was promoted to sergeant and moved to Homicide where he became a supervisor and was tabbed to head the Berdella Squad, formed shortly after Chris Bryson was found hobbling down the street naked and wearing a dog collar. He spoke to **Real Crime** about this case.

## THE MAKING OF BOB BERDELLA

"I think he was a sexual sadist and enjoyed seeing people suffer. An extremely sick individual," Cole told **Real Crime**. Looking deeper into Berdella's history, all the warnings were there, but like many psychopaths he slipped through the cracks. Growing up in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio - a city much like his adopted Kansas City - Bob fancied himself an artist, even attending the Kansas City Art Institute from 1967 to 1969.

Quiet, aloof and considered weird, the young Berdella lost his father to a heart attack as a teenager. His father was only 39 years old. Raised in the Catholic Church, Berdella questioned his faith, asking why his father had been taken from him. This was a crucial point for the young man: when his religion didn't offer any answers, Berdella turned to Satanic cults. This ideology change prompted a change in his art too, which started getting very dark and extreme.

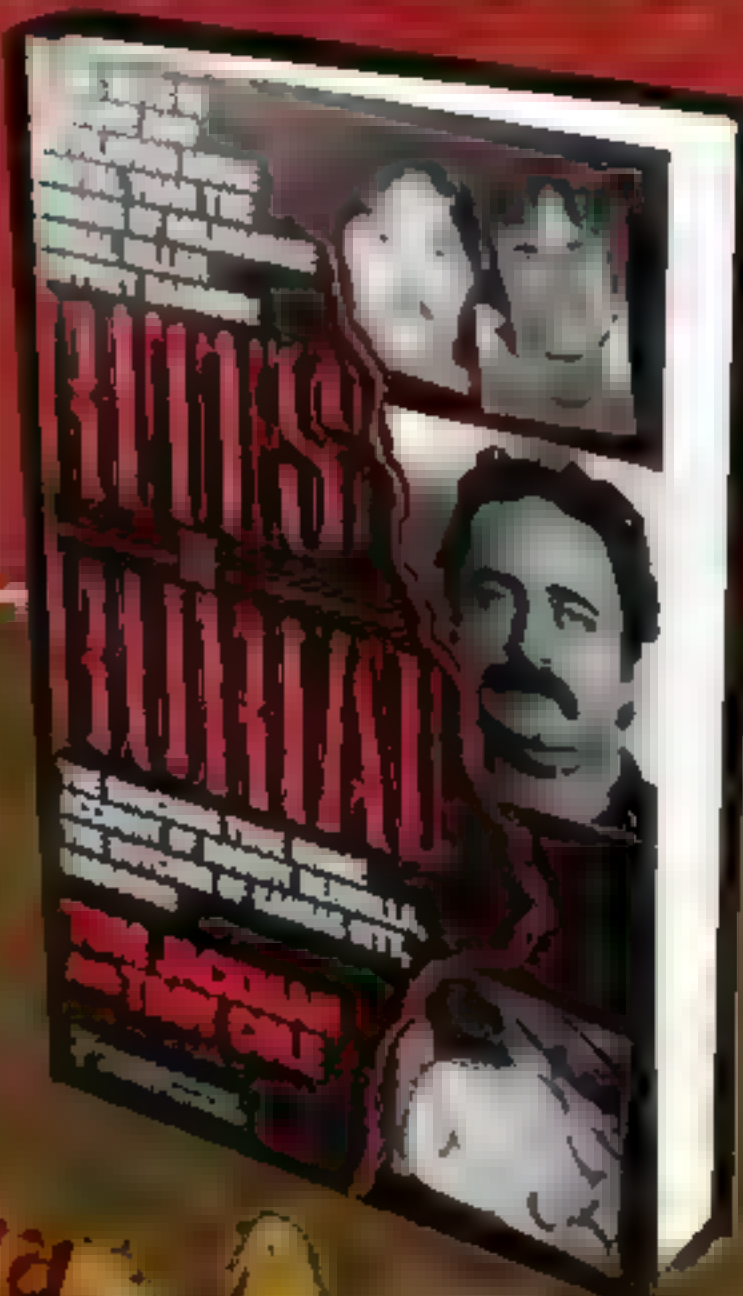
Berdella called it 'art', but others called it what it was - animal cruelty. Bob allegedly decapitated a duck and even killed a dog as part of his increasingly heinous art projects. Appalled, the art institute kicked him out, fuelling Bob's growing anger at the loss of his father, twisting his art and fantasies into even more devilish realms. Being criticised and punished for his art was a wake-up call for Berdella. In the future his art projects would be more private.



Under the facade of an everyday citizen, Bob Berdella was in a fact a beast of demonic proportions

## BIO TROY COLE

A life-long law enforcement veteran, Troy worked as a police officer in Washington, DC before he moved to Kansas City, eventually becoming a detective and then a sergeant. He co-authored a book, *Rites of Burial*, with Tom Jackman, detailing Berdella's sadomasochistic activities.



Very few people would have suspected that Berdella was a serial killer. He was a quiet, reserved man who worked as a police officer in Washington, DC before he moved to Kansas City, eventually becoming a detective and then a sergeant. He co-authored a book, *Rites of Burial*, with Tom Jackman, detailing Berdella's sadomasochistic activities. These included human skulls, torture devices, occult literature and Satanic ritual robes. Berdella's fantasies were coalescing in his mind.

Berdella wrote to pen pals in such distant locales as Burma and Vietnam and was a fan of the 1965 film adaptation of John Fowles' novel *The Collector*, where a young woman is kidnapped and held in a man's basement. That type of power and control appealed to Berdella. His 'magnum opus' was opening Bob's Bazaar Bizarre at the Westport flea market that catered to those with like-minded tastes, attracting the young, naive and confused. From shrunken heads to an extensive library on witchcraft, human skulls to antiques, the shop was a magnet for wayward youths. It appeared Berdella had created the perfect circumstances to let his darkest fantasies become reality.

## INVESTIGATING BOB

"First contact with Berdella was July 1984 when Jerry Howell was reported missing. Howell's father suspected Berdella of having something to do with his disappearance



# Bob's Bazaar Bizarre

BERDELLA'S SHOP WAS APPROPRIATELY ODD AND ATTRACTED ALL TYPES WITH ITS MORBID CURIOSITIES

Photos of Berdella's gallery of erotica from Bob's Bazaar Bizarre at Westport flea market ran in the local newspapers, highlighting Berdella's obsession with the darker side of life. An array of oddities, artefacts and collectibles that veered towards Satanic cults and murderabilia filled the shop, attracting all types of confused and lost souls that Berdella exploited to his purposes when the opportunity allowed.

In reality the shop was just a trap set to ensnare prey. The weekend Berdella was apprehended, Kansas City was hosting the NCAA Final Four Basketball Tournament, and Berdella had four human skulls displayed in the window of his shop with a "Final Four" sign. Some said that the skulls were of his victims, but it was never substantiated. Berdella always had an eye out for young men who would have sex with him for money. Berdella was always on a mission to lure them back to the house so that he could have his way with them.

but there was no evidence to support his suspicion," Cole told **Real Crime**. "Jerry Howell knew Bob Berdella. His father had a spot at the flea market alongside him. They knew each other, and Jerry used to hang out and knew Bob Berdella quite well. They had consensual sex in the past. Then in 1984 Jerry Howell comes up missing."

Paul Howell, Jerry's father, suspected Berdella and confronted him, but Berdella swore that he didn't know what had happened to Jerry. He claimed to have dropped him off downtown on the last day after his last day. But Howell continued to be suspicious. He went through Berdella's trash and watched his comings and goings, looking for the evidence he needed to prove his suspicions. But it wasn't forthcoming – not until Chris Bryson made his escape almost four years later.

"I was working the night shift and on weekends you have one sergeant that works homicide, robberies and sex crimes," Cole told **Real Crime**. "The dispatcher called and said, 'We have a naked white male wearing a dog collar... he claims he's been tortured and he just escaped by jumping out of a second-floor window.' I had two officers go out to do the interview and see if it was worth having a detective crew come out."

The officers called shortly after and reported to Cole that it looked like there was something to this. Bryson had injuries to his mouth, ankles and wrists and claimed that he'd been held captive for five days. It was evident to the officers that

he'd probably been tied up at one point as he claimed. Bryson told the officers that the man who was responsible was called Bob – a total stranger to him. Bryson was probably trying to bust Berdella, but got way more than he ever bargained for. Once he was in that house at 4315 Charlotte Street, he never thought he'd get out alive.

"While the uniforms are watching the house," Cole said, "Bob Berdella drives up and sees the officers and says, 'What's going on here?' The officers say, 'Who are you?' and he says, 'I'm Bob Berdella and that's my house.' At that point they placed him under arrest for suspicion of sodomy from what Bryson had told. They called me again and said, 'We got him in custody,' and I said, 'Bring him in and get him booked in.' We advised him of his rights and told him the allegations against him to see if he wanted to comment. But he said, 'I don't have anything to say.'"

Cole and his squad were in the process of getting a search warrant for Berdella's house based on the allegations. They needed to find some hard evidence to back up Bryson's claims. But once they got in the house they found all the

## TODD STOOPS

The 21-year-old male prostitute was a former acquaintance of Berdella and was abducted from Liberty Memorial Park and taken to Berdella's dark dreamhouse. He was sodomised and had Drano injected into his eyes and vocal box. He died of exsanguination.

CAPTURED 17 JUNE 1986  
DIED 1 JULY 1986

**"WE HAVE A NAKED WHITE MALE WEARING A DOG COLLAR... HE CLAIMS HE'S BEEN TORTURED AND HE JUST ESCAPED"**





## WALTER JAMES FERRIS

20-year-old Ferris actually called Berdella looking for a place to stay, and Berdella couldn't believe his luck. He kidnapped and tortured Ferris for 27 straight hours with electrical shocks to his genitals and violent acupuncture. Drugged with tranquillisers, Ferris became delirious and died just over 24 hours later by asphyxiation.

**CAPTURED 26 SEPTEMBER 1985**  
**DIED 28 SEPTEMBER 1985**

**"THEY DECIDED TO DIG THE YARD UP. ON THE SECOND SCOOP THEY UNCOVERED A HUMAN HEAD THAT STILL HAD HAIR ON IT"**

**TOP** Berdella used his shop and business, located at the Westport flea market, to attract young, lost and confused men that he could prey upon.

evidence they needed to book Berdella on felony counts of sodomy, assault and felonious restraint.

Animal Control was called in because a neighbour told the police that Berdella's huge Chow Chow dogs were vicious. When the police kicked in the front door Animal Control went in first and subdued the dogs. The house was cluttered from floor to ceiling and it stank to high heaven, Cole remembered: "There was dog faeces everywhere, been tracked around, and there was a big old pot in the kitchen that had a turkey carcass that had a smell to it. It was a pretty tough go with all the odours around. This house obviously hadn't been cleaned forever. It was horrible. You literally had to step around stuff. It was in disarray. The kitchen was piled with dirty dishes."

"We find the metal tray with several syringes and different types of drugs," Cole said. "We continue our search throughout the house and sometime later we find an envelope containing a couple of hundred Polaroids of young men. They showed several different people in various stages of being tortured. We found another section of Polaroids that



**bob's  
bazaar  
bizarre**

Ethnological  
Curiosities  
From the World  
Far Corners

817 westport road  
kansas city, mo. 64111  
in the old westport  
flea market

Robert Berdella  
816/753-9789  
Res. 561-8179

## CHRIS BRYSON

Bryson was 22 years old when he fell into the clutches of Berdella. He was abducted, tortured, raped and held captive for five days before escaping from Bob's dark dreamhouse. The male prostitute was lured to the house with promises of money for his services, but Berdella never had any intentions of paying Bryson.

**CAPTURED 29 MARCH 1988**  
**ESCAPED 2 APRIL 1988**

contained photos of Chris Bryson where he had been tied up. That pretty much verified his story. We had photos of him being tied to the bed, being tortured and sodomised. The case feels really good at that point." The pictures led Cole to believe that there might be more to it.

Some showed victims with cucumbers and carrots stuck up their rectums. But one photograph they found was of a guy who was coming by in a line in the basement. It looked to Cole like the man was possibly dead. The rest of the photos showed no evidence indicating death – they were just bound and tortured. The detectives also found a skull sitting in a closet with a packet of teeth in an envelope.

The investigation started in earnest at 9am on Easter Sunday morning. They went through everything in the house and found a plot in the backyard where there were two-by-fours that looked like a burial site. They decided to dig the yard up. On the second scoop they uncovered a human head that still had hair on it, and, having been disturbed, the lower jaw separated from the skull. It was at that point that Cole knew there was something even more sinister going on. "My first thought was, 'I hope all the people that we saw in the Polaroids are not buried back here.'"

### "PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY"

"Most of his neighbours and associates thought he was a decent man and could not believe he was capable of doing



**" THE TORTURE LOGS HAD  
HIGHLY DETAILED EXPERIMENT-  
TYPE NOTES OF THE DRUGS AND  
BEATINGS ADMINISTERED "**



## LARRY WAYNE PEARSON

Berdella told police that Pearson was the most cooperative of his victims. Over a six-week period, the 20-year-old was beaten, tortured, raped and finally suffocated to death with a plastic bag that Berdella put over his head. Pearson first met Berdella when he entered his shop and told him how much he was interested in witchcraft. They struck up a friendship, and Berdella lured him to his house of horrors.

**CAPTURED 23 JUNE 1987  
DIED 5 AUGUST 1987**

the things he was charged with. He was the captain of his neighbourhood block watch," Cole told *Real Crime*. "He had contact with the police department from time to time. He was a pillar of the community. When I talked to him [after he was arrested] he was extremely nervous. He was visibly shaking. But I still thought it was a lovers' quarrel gone bad."

But the truth was much scarier and brought to mind the most macabre of horror stories. The house was ransacked and the yard dug up to unearth secrets, but while they failed to uncover the mass grave, they first feared, police uncovered masses of other evidence. "The basement was used to put up some of his victims, whereas others were tortured and dismembered in a second-floor bathtub. A bed on the second floor was where most of the victims were tortured," Cole said. "He buried the heads of two victims in his backyard [he later brought one head back inside to put on display]. All other bodies were dismembered and put out for the trash man to pick up.

"That was the beginning of a long three to four months for me. I'm not sure how to rank serial killers, but Berdella was somewhat unique in the way he kept his victims. He tortured each one a little longer than the one before. It ranged from the first victim being held for three days to the last victim being kept for 41 days. He was bringing these people to his house in exchange for money. It took three or four days to go through the yard. But nothing else of evidentiary value [turned up]. We had detectives assigned to that house for two

weeks. We found a journal. We didn't know what we had at first because it was coded, but we later referred to what we found as the torture logs."

The torture logs had highly detailed experiment-type notes of the drugs and beatings administered, victims' reactions and the final result. It was almost like Berdella was seeing what the human body could handle. Jerry Howell's name was on his torture log. Walter James Ferris's was also on it, but some of the others weren't identified. The detectives found chainsaws and circular saws that were used in the homicides. It was turning into a house of horrors.

Having two fresh skulls on his property didn't make Berdella a murderer, but it definitely made him a suspect. But police still didn't have enough evidence to charge Berdella with murder.

The case was backwards. Usually the police department had a body and little evidence, but in this case they had instruments that were used to cut up bodies and photos of people being tortured, but no bodies.

They checked dental records on the two skulls, hoping one of them would be Howell or Ferris, but they weren't. The biggest obstacle was trying to identify the men in the photos, and the leads took them all over the country. These types of men didn't stay in one place for long or even have permanent addresses. The victims had no family or community ties. They were hustlers, transients in the underground gay community and ostracised from society. Detectives finally



# THE TORTURE LOGS

## BERDELLA RECORDED DATA ON THE TORTURE HE INFLICTED AND THE DRUGS HE ADMINISTERED TO HIS VICTIMS

Berdella kept logs that read like crude scientific experiments except he was experimenting on humans to see how much torture and drugs a victim's body could take. When police first found the logs they didn't know what they had. Berdella used codes for everything – bleach in a victim's eyes, injecting drain cleaner into vocal cords and even gouging out a victim's eyes. Walter Ferris was, according to Berdella, the first victim that he tortured intentionally, for 27 hours before he died – a short period compared to the weeks later victims spent in Berdella's company.

### FERRIS 9/26 DRUG

9.00 Out (at 9pm on the Wednesday)	penetration, ketamine injection)
victim James Walter Ferris is unconscious)	
9.05 Shoes + socks off, move arms	10.15 BF no react (anal sex)
snoring no rea (no reaction)	10.30 tied arms
9.10 Test need no react 2 1/2 cc left	10.50-11.00 Carrot F slight resist
a "3 cc right a" (Chlorpromazine)	1 1/2 cc cp nk (penetration with a
injection in the arm is used to subdue	carrot, victim's neck injected)
this victim)	11.00 2 cc cp vein
9.20 Photo, clothes off, no react	11.30-11.45 BF, cub F, slight react
9.40 Turned over, slight arm	Regag)
movement	(two more pages of torture log follow
9.50 Fing F no react 1 1/2 cc ket arm	in this vein, before Berdella leaves
no react Front F no react (Digital)	a code '86' on the Friday, meaning
	'Stop the project')

cropped the photos to just show the faces, publicised them on local TV and got them printed in all the newspapers.

"That generated hundreds and hundreds of phone calls and led to the identification of all the unknown victims," Cole told *Real Crime*. "Once we got them identified we had to go out and determine if they were still alive or just a friend of Bob's. Did they have consensual sex? Were they tortured? Everyone had to be interviewed individually."

Eventually Cole and his team managed to get them all identified. The skull they found in the backyard turned out to be that of Larry Wayne Pearson. He was the last victim that Berdella killed. Before Larry Pearson was identified,

**ABOVE** When the KCPD searched Berdella's house it was a mess. They searched for two weeks and found notes on the victims that they called the 'Torture Logs'

**BELOW** The press generated by the Butcher of Kansas City case led to numerous headlines in the Kansas City papers, as the media became seemingly infatuated with the serial killer

The skull of Robert Sheldon, a 23-year-old who lived with Berdella shortly before he was killed in 1985 by the serial killer



Cole's team got Robert Sheldon identified. He was the skull in the cupboard next to the teeth. Sheldon was the squad's first murder case. They found paperwork in the house that identified him, got people to identify him in the photos and eventually got dental records – and it was a wrap.

Berdella knew they were working a case against him. Sitting in jail for three months, he couldn't get parole. Cole lived and breathed the case for six months but admitted that it still impacts him 30 years later. "The police chief used to come to us every couple of days and say, 'You all are looking at some real gruesome stuff, if you need some counselling let us know.' But counselling back then was done by Jack Daniels." The case had a lot of circumstantial evidence but no smoking gun. Cole didn't want Berdella getting off.

"There was an FBI officer, who was a criminal profiler, that was brought on to the case to assist us," Cole told *Real Crime*. "He thought we should bring Berdella down to our

The skull of Larry Pearson was found buried in Berdella's backyard. It still had hair on it and was less than a year old

## Police investigate house; skull dug up

*Robert A. Berdella*  
Abduction story prompts search, sodomy charges

APR 4 - 1988 AM  
By Sean Hillen  
Of the Metropolitan Staff

Police unearthed what they think is a human skull Sunday afternoon in the back yard of a Midtown home where a man says he was held captive and sexually abused for five days.

The resident of the house at 4315 Charlotte St., Robert A. Berdella, was arrested Saturday and charged with seven counts of sodomy. He was being held without bond and is scheduled to be arraigned today, said Sgt. Laura Mulloy, a spokesman for the Kansas City Police Department.

Berdella owns Bob's Bazaar, Bazaar at 817 Westport Road, in the Old Westport Flea Market, where he sells beads, jewelry, antiques and ethnic ornaments.

The victim, 23, was in stable condition at a hospital Sunday with cuts all over his body, police said. The case...







The mugshot of the man who would go on to be known as the 'Butcher of Kansas City'



The Missouri State Penitentiary, where Berdella did his time before having a heart attack four years into his sentence

## "WE RECOVERED HUNDREDS OF POLAROID PHOTOS... SHOWING VICTIMS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF EXTREME TORTURE"

...with the evidence  
...of the victims and  
...the evidence is starting to mount. He's  
...a pretty good suspect in the disappearance of these  
...two guys."

### THE MEDIA HYPE

"The Kansas City media was on it 24-7," Cole said. "[The story] also received lots of outside coverage [from outlets] such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Police*, *Time* magazine and *Wendell* *Rising* *Star*. The fact that these serial killers so people were naturally shocked. The nature of the crimes also contributed to the hysteria. I've worked on hundreds of murder cases but had never witnessed torture like this. We recovered hundreds of Polaroid photos from the residence showing victims in various stages of extreme torture."

When Berdella started making headlines on every newscast, the Howell and Ferris families came forward and said, "Hey, our kids were last seen with this guy." At that point it piqued Cole's interest even more. He had detectives going back and looking into the missing persons investigation they had done regarding Howell and Ferris. Missing persons had been to Berdella's house and searched it, but they found nothing. There was still no evidence to connect Berdella to the disappearances.

"We had two kids, Jerry Howell and Walter James Ferris," Cole said. "They had both been reported missing. Both family members had suspected that Bob Berdella had something to do with it. [They] came to us and said, 'We think that he had something to do with their disappearance.' In Berdella's

house we find the driver's license of Walter James Ferris and photos and newspaper clippings of Jerry Howell's missing person case. So now the evidence is starting to mount. He's becoming a pretty good suspect in the disappearance of these two guys."

Berdella had brought his dark fantasies to life, but it was time to pay the piper, and word was coming down that the state was looking to hang the death penalty on Berdella, who must have thought even life in prison looked good in comparison. "He actually was a pretty bright guy," Cole said. "If you checked his IQ you might be surprised. But he was weird." He was almost demon-like in the way he kept detailed torture logs. There was even some speculation in the media about Berdella's victims being mixed in with the food he sold out of his shop.

In truth, despite his evil ways and dark fantasies made reality, Berdella was scared to die. Like most, when it came down to it he'd do or say anything to stay alive. After one victim's father ambushed Berdella at a court appearance, Bob decided to make a deal with prosecutors. He would tell them who he killed, where the bodies were and what really happened in his dark dreamhouse, where Bob's fantasies, long-harboured in his mind, became manifest in reality - horrific scenes from a snuff movie where young men were subjected to unreal cruelties and abuse.

Sentenced to life in prison for his crimes, Bob only lasted four years in the big house before succumbing to a cardiac arrest, just like his father, on 9 October 1992 at the age of 43. The Butcher of Kansas City harboured horrible thoughts for a long time before he started killing but as it turned out, the maniac at the centre of the 4315 Charlotte Street dreamhouse, had as weak a heart as it was black.







# Death House LANDLADY



THE SMELL OF BREAKFAST DRIFTED UPSTAIRS. IT MADE THE BEDROOM FEEL HOMEY RATHER THAN LIKE A HOSTEL. BUT BY NIGHT, THE DRUGGED TENANT AWAITED BURIAL IN THE BACK GARDEN...  
COURTESY OF THE OLD LANDLADY

WORDS BY CHARLIE OUGHTON



**D**orothea Puente was not your stereotypical grandma. After a life of bad luck with suitors, she suited herself to remain solvent by embarking on a criminal career that included involvement with brothels, forging cheques (from ex-partners), pocketing people's social security money and eventually moving into the murder game with tenants of the boarding house she ran in Sacramento, California. Jailed for life for three murders in 1993, she became known as the Death House Landlady.

## SACRAMENTO'S SENIOR CITIZEN

The Dorothea who stood sour faced and frumpy in the court room was not the same woman who welcomed the weary – often disabled people, substance misusers and other vulnerable citizens – over her hostel threshold. That Dorothea was like a southern angel in disguise. Even as an older lady she had a dainty, girlish quality, with a delicate face, eyes accentuated by heavy liner and peroxide-blond hair. This contrasted against the heavy lines that scarred her visage. She had seen and experienced the highs and lows life could bring, and while there would be no nonsense, there would, it seemed, also be no judgement of her charges, and this is how she got into the line of work she did.

Dorothea was a sweet talker who could make her tenants feel not so alone. To the social workers who would visit to recommend her potential tenants, it was a case of a 'welcome home from home'. And what a home it was. A light and airy Victorian-style building, it was always spick and span. It was just a pity that the garden contained more than shrubs.

Some may raise eyebrows at a sweet old lady taking in hardened criminals, mob 'ma' style, so instead Dorothea's guests were those to whom you might say life had thrown a hard time. They were regulars at cold, grey, corrugated detox places where the addicted would wait for deliverance or death. Dorothea would make a point of searching them out in the darkened, dusty smoke rooms of ale houses to give them advice – a public service, if you will. She'd talk to them on the matter of how to increase their state benefits by telling The Man what he needed to know, and from there would invite them into her sanctuary. Sure, it was a trick of the trade against the social system, but then, surely (they may have reasoned), the social system wasn't just if it didn't help those in need? Dorothea described her charges to acquaintances as 'railway people' – those shunted from place to place and in need of someone to steer them on home.

## BIG BERT

One such resident was Alvaro 'Bert' Montoya, a heavy-set gentleman with a bushy beard and anxious eyebrows. He was referred to Dorothea by an outreach worker concerned that a life on the street was no way to live for a person in his position. A kindly soul who would give anyone the shirt off his back, he was nevertheless plagued by the voices in his head that the medication for schizophrenia could not quell; his finger circling his head in a 'crazy' gesture yet cracking a hopeless, benign smile when describing his mental state.



**ABOVE** Drab surroundings and unflattering clothes fail to disguise the fine, alert features of the hawk-like murderess

Dorothea took a shine to the gentle giant. While her other tenants paid \$375 a month for board and two square meals a day, Bert paid nothing. Indeed, much to the irritation of his housemates, he became the landlady's lapdog, with the no-nonsense hostel keeper giving him new clothes and even putting a tab down for him at a local bar. The relationship grew so close that he came to call her 'Mama'.

Dorothea was determined to keep the hostel (which she rented) in good working order, and residents were required to help out with the chores. If they didn't, they could hit the highroad, with several, such as Ben Fink, disappearing overnight. This seemed to happen during Dorothea's more strenuous projects, such as the time her team ripped out the house owners' rose beds to lay new patios. Dorothea would divide the tasks into tiny little chunks and make sure everyone got involved – it gave them something to do.

It was when Bert stopped helping that eyebrows were raised. It had been known that there were some issues at the house, as Bert had been seen to abuse Dorothea's hospitality and came home steaming drunk one day, shortly before taking himself across the city on foot one evening to detox. Folk simply attributed the episode to Bert's mental

**“THE OFFICERS HAD A BONE TO PICK WITH MS PUENTE. PITY SHE'D ALREADY SKIPPED TOWN. WELL, SKIPPED INTO A TAXI TO STOCKTON AND JUMPED ON A BUS TO LA”**







**BELOW** While Puente was on the run, coroners' officers were excavating her gardens, knee deep in the decomposing remains of those who trusted her



state, with whispers of the supposedly haunted room in her house (occupied, it was said, by a suicide victim) not helping matters in terms of exacerbating the already present paranoia. Bert didn't come back. At all.

A man of that size and height doesn't vanish into dust. Knowing he had no family and nowhere to go, his social worker phoned the police. Several local clients had told her that there were... rumours. Sufficiently spooked, she asked the force to investigate the little piles of brown soil that would appear in the property's garden from time to time, saying – the God's honest truth – it looked like a graveyard.

### THE HOUSE ON F STREET

Detective John Cabrera and his colleagues walked up to 1426 F Street and rapped on the smartly painted door. Peering out from behind her big, round glasses and inviting the nice officers in was little Dorothea. They didn't have a warrant, so were relying on her charity for co-operation. She set them up with a room in which to talk to the residents and offered to get some friends to help them dig up her lawn, naturally nervous (you'd think) of anything untoward on her property.

With his shirt sleeves rolled up, Detective Cabrera was knee deep in grime – the rubbish of years of tenants gone by – when he banged something hard. Thinking it was a stray root, he yanked it out and studied it. No reason to necessarily panic when the thing that surfaced was found to have a hip joint – these here are old houses. It's not unheard of for

## AN IMAGE OF PHILANTHROPY

DOROTHEA WORKED HARD TO CREATE A PUBLIC IMAGE THAT WAS 100 PER CENT GOODLY GRANNY TO KEEP THE COMMUNITY FROM DISCOVERING HER DREADFUL DEEDS

### CHURCH-GOER

Dorothea used taxis to go everywhere she went. Tipping generously and developing a friendly 'woman to woman' relationship with her driver, this included trips to the church on Sundays.

### CASH DONATIONS

Known in Sacramento's political circles, Dorothea donated (some of her tenants') cash to good causes and was regularly honoured with songs dedicated to her name on local radio.

### ELDERLY ADOPTEE

Dorothea was 'adopted' by the family who owned the hostel. They grew so close as to visit her in prison after she was convicted of the murders.

### GOOD SAMARITAN

Generous to a fault, she provided bar tabs for those she termed important citizens in the hope of using their professional services – knowledge or criminal networks – to support her empire.

### GOODWILL GIVEAWAYS

Hosting a hostel meant managing lodgers' discarded clothing, so Dorothea gave it to charity shops. It was a great way to get rid of evidence while also appearing socially conscientious.





## DROP IN ON DOROTHEA

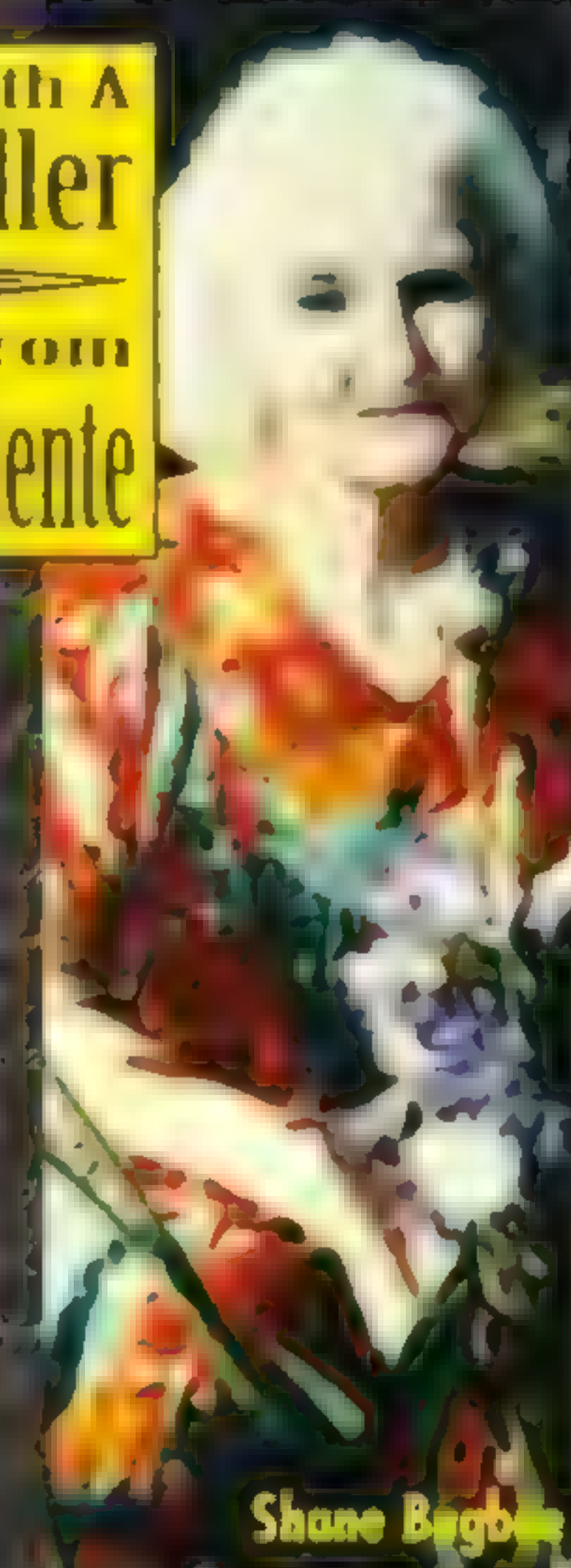
HISTORY AND HORROR HOUSE GRAND TOUR FOR ALL GOOD CITIZENS (AND TOURISTS, TOO)

Sacramento has made a killing from its grisly history and has no less than incorporated the property into a local sight-seeing tour. As showcased on KCRA News, guests will be greeted by none other than the multiple-murdering 'madam' herself – Dorothea Puente: a mannequin complete with wig, specs and a fetching overcoat just like the real thing. Her former abode was a 'steal' at \$215,000 when bought at public auction by Barbara Holmes. It now has a pleasant sun terrace, retiled front steps, new kitchen accessories, a shower curtain of faux crime scene tape and a sign reminding all trespassers that they risk being buried in the old back yard, just like Dorothea's victims. There's even a grinning demon statue for those all important Instagram pics.

**ABOVE** Seven bodies were recovered from the garden on Puente's house on F Street, and she would be charged with murdering nine of the city's most vulnerable residents

**BELOW** "Dorothea Puente has been accused of a lot of things," so goes a newspaper review of her collaborative cook book effort with author Shane Bugbee, "...but being a bad cook isn't one of them".

Cooking With A  
Serial Killer  
Recipes From  
Dorothea Puente



residents to find remains of people buried who were too poor to afford a proper funeral in days gone by. Partly as a point of procedure, the coroner was called.

By the next day, the street got wind of the grot in grandma Dorothea's garden. TV crews converged, the street was sealed off and enterprising privateers started hawking "I dig Sacramento!" t-shirts from the end of the road. It was so frenetic that the lawmen escorted Dorothea (resplendent in her red coat, purple pumps and with a pretty pink umbrella) out of the street so she could have a quiet coffee around the corner with her nephew for two minutes' peace.

A find like this could be good for the sunshine state's local history. The area was known for its links with the gold rush, but a new finding (especially in a house built in 1895) might generate tourism... at least that was the thinking until a skull and other parts from different corpses in different parts of the garden came to light. The officers had a bone to pick with Ms Puente. Pity she'd already skipped town. Well, skipped into a taxi to Stockton and jumped on a bus to LA as soon as she turned the corner, to be more exact.

Later, a small, elderly woman sat herself on a bar stool next to a lone man. They drank together, laughed and arranged to meet again. For once, the lack of Tinder back in the day didn't matter because as soon as the mystery woman had left, the man saw her fugitive face beamed right back at him, fearsome size, on the TV. Swipe left to call the cops...

### THE TENANTS TIME FORGOT

Seven bodies were recovered from her backyard. Blisterer Ben Fink (who had vanished during gardening season) was identified by his tattoo. Betty Palmer – resident of some years previous – was found relieved of her feet, hands and head (presumably to remove the possibility of identification).





**ABOVE** A body is removed from Puente's house. Onlookers initially expected the find to reveal something about the town, not the seemingly sweet lady living at 1426 F Street

Puente appeared in court dressed in a sober jumper and with immaculately coiffured hair



Another former tenant, Leona Carpenter, was found with her legs in a raised position with the earth underneath them, suggesting a struggle as she suffocated having been buried alive. Finally Bert, too, was identified. Each body was found to have traces of prescription substances. And of the hostel's haunted room? Pulling back the carpet, Detective Cabrera found traces of bodily fluid. The only definitely evil thing in there was the way in which the supposed philanthropist had stowed corpses until it was convenient to bury them.

### LIFE-LONG LIAR

It is only at her trial that the full scale of Dorothea's deception became clear. While men were bringing up the bones among the marigolds in her backyard, her own skeletons were dropping out of the closet in court. She'd lied to everyone about the ledger of her entire life. Dorothea Helen Grey was born in Redlands, California. Several stories exist of her upbringing, from being a Mexican orphan through to having varying amounts of siblings. She'd moved from relationship to relationship, working in brothels and forging cheques as she went, leading to two stints in jail before she even became an old lady. Turns out that the whole time she'd been funding her boarding house empire (including some she had run before moving to the murder house) by persuading the residents to add her to their social security accounts. She'd withdraw the money on their behalf, give them cash and skim the rest for herself. It funded a lavish lifestyle said to include

jewellery, cocktails and even facelifts. Probation officers knew of her history, although it has been alleged by biographers that her sweet exterior and their high workloads meant they simply did not spot the signs of Dorothea's sadistic set-up.

Over the years, Puente had insulated herself from allegations of impropriety by becoming the town's benefactor and getting involved in political circles. That said, even with this, her murders could not be swept under the carpet.

Dorothea Puente checked in to the courthouse on nine charges of murder. Seven of these related to the decomposed bodies found at F street, another was the recent burial of Bert Montoya and another related to her former acquaintance, Everson Gillmouth, who was found in a homemade coffin by a river bank and whose social security cheques she had continued to withdraw. By the time her sojourn at court was finished, and at 64 years of age, Dorothea took her leave for life in prison in Chowchilla, convicted of three of the nine deaths. This was all that it was felt could be reasonably proved were her own doing, considering the impracticalities of disposing of bodies in the back garden on her own. Her tenant, Mervin John McAuley, was arrested as an accessory to murder but released without charge. How the bodies got beneath the soil remains a mystery.

Not one to keep things above board, Dorothea's time in prison was eventful and, ever the hostess from Hell, she actually collaborated to write *Cooking with a Serial Killer*, a recipe book with a picture of herself in a fancy floral frock on the front cover (just to make it pop). Longings still crept carefully within the creases of her greedy eye sockets.

The lost people of Sacramento met their deaths in the supposed safety of Dorothy Puente's hostel, but her lies were also the recipe for her own undoing – she died in jail on 27 March 2011 at the age of 82, having got her own just desserts. She maintained her innocence of the murders to the end.

**“WHILE MEN WERE BRINGING UP THE BONES IN HER BACKYARD, HER OWN SKELETONS WERE DROPPING OUT OF THE CLOSET”**









# THE RED RIPPER

HOW A TOXIC MIX OF INFALLIBLE ALIBIS AND PRIMITIVE FORENSICS  
ALLOWED ANDREI CHIKATILO TO BECOME RUSSIA'S SICKEST SERIAL KILLER

WORDS ALICEA FRANCIS

**I**t took 13 years for one of the sickest serial killers in the world to be brought before a judge. As he climbed the staircase to his iron cage, the packed courtroom erupted into sobs and shrieks. Some lunged towards him screaming "Give him to us!" and the guards were forced to wrestle them back to their seats. The defendant's eyes darted around the room in terror as he gasped for breath; he knew that if the State didn't kill him, these people would.

When the judge read out the charges, the process took two days. And when the defendant was allowed to speak, he described himself as a man cursed by a lifetime of sexual frustration that had eventually driven him to murder. The trial would continue for six months, during which time he would mutter and mumble under his breath or throw back his head with deranged laughter. On one occasion he

jumped to his feet, dropped his trousers and waved his penis at the crowd, exclaiming, "Look at this useless thing, what do you think I could do with that?" He appeared to be a madman, but whether he was one was up for debate.

The judge, however, had made up his mind about Andrei Chikatilo long before the trial had even begun. The man was sane and he was a cold-blooded killer. On 15 October 1992, he pronounced the defendant guilty of five counts of molestation and 52 counts of murder. After reading the verdicts, the judge said: "Taking into consideration the monstrous crimes he committed, this court has no alternative but to impose the only sentence that he deserves. I therefore sentence him to death." Two years later, Chikatilo was led through a dark corridor of his Rostov prison to a private cell, where he was executed by



a single shot behind the right ear. He had finally got his just reward, but for the dozens he had brutally murdered – not to mention their families – it meant nothing.

## BETWEEN PLEASURE AND PAIN

On a bitterly cold evening in December 1978, in the small coal mining town of Shakhty, southern Russia, nine-year-old schoolgirl Lena Zakotnova was on her way home when a man stopped to talk to her. He was friendly, with greying hair, oversized spectacles, and carrying a shopping bag. He asked her if she wanted to try some chewing gum that he'd had specially imported from America. Eager to try this tempting exotic treat, she agreed.

The man took her by the hand and led her to a small, run-down shack close to the Grushevka River. Once inside, he pushed her to the floor and tore off her clothes. To stop her screaming, he pressed his forearm against her throat until she lay still. Her eyes were still open, so he blindfolded them before attempting to have sex with her. When he failed to get an erection, he began to violate her genitals with his fingers and the girl came to. He reached inside his shopping bag and produced a knife, slashing her three times across the stomach. As he did so, he ejaculated. It was then that Chikatilo realised that extreme violence was the only way that he could achieve orgasm. This was the Red Ripper's 'watershed' moment.

Finally satisfied after 42 years of impotence, he carried the girl's lifeless, bloodied body to the river and threw it into the icy water. When it was discovered floating downstream the following day, a woman reported seeing a girl talking to a tall, middle-aged man who wore glasses and a long black coat. A sketch of the suspect was drawn up and Chikatilo was questioned, but his wife provided him with an alibi. Instead, a local man with a previous rape conviction called Aleksandr Kravchenko was arrested. Unlike the witness's description, Kravchenko was just 25 years old. However, after a brutal interrogation, he confessed to the crime under duress and was executed.

Shaken by his close brush with the law, Chikatilo managed to resist his urges for the next three years. But the memories of Lena's murder and the pleasure he had experienced when the blade cut through her flesh never left his mind.

Then, one night in September 1981, as he waited at a bus stop outside the Rostov public library, he met Larisa Tkachenko. A 17-year-old who was playing truant from boarding school, Tkachenko was more sexually experienced than his previous victim and agreed to an encounter in the woods. He led her into a nearby forest, where he began ripping off her clothes. When she panicked and tried to stop him, he pushed her to the ground and stuffed dirt into her mouth, then strangled her. Finally, he bit off one of her nipples and ejaculated over her corpse as he did so.

Her death marked a new – and chilling – chapter in Chikatilo's maniacal hunt for victims. It was also the start of a murder spree. He began targeting young runaways, befriending them at bus stops and train stations before luring them into nearby woodland, where he would try to rape them. When he failed to achieve an erection, he would start using his knife as a substitute weapon. He would then often eat their sexual organs and cut off the tip of their tongue and nose. Nearly all of his victims had their eyes gouged out. Between 1982 and 1983, a further 15 bodies with these trademark mutilations were discovered. It soon became clear that a serial killer was on the loose.



## THE FATAL FLAW

Specialist forensic analyst Viktor Burakov was assigned to the case; due to the unimaginable brutality of the crimes, he focused the search on the mentally disabled. It led to the arrest of a 19-year-old man called Yuri Kalenik, who had spent most of his life in a home for mentally handicapped children. After days of interrogation, he confessed to seven of the murders, but Burakov could see that the confession had been forced. His doubts were confirmed when the mutilated body of yet another woman was found. She had been killed approximately three days earlier, while Kalenik had been in custody. Another resident of the children's home was arrested, but bodies kept appearing. Finally, the police discovered their first reliable piece of evidence: semen in the anus of one of the male victims. At last, they could determine the killer's blood type.

By the end of summer 1984, the authorities had linked 24 murders to the Rostov butcher. The Minister of the Interior appointed another dozen detectives to the case, bringing the total task force up to around 200. One undercover police officer spotted a middle-aged man talking to a young girl at a bus stop and decided to question him. When Chikatilo explained that he was a retired teacher who simply missed

**ABOVE** Chikatilo lured his victims into the woods near train stations. His first murder was committed while he was working at this school (top) in Shakhty, in the south-east of Russia

**RIGHT** In court, the true face of this psychopathic killer was revealed. Chikatilo cried, raved, laughed and even waved his penis at the gallery

**“ WHEN HE FAILED TO ACHIEVE AN ERECTION, HE WOULD START USING HIS KNIFE AS A SUBSTITUTE WEAPON ”**



**“WHEN I USED MY KNIFE, IT BROUGHT  
PSYCHOLOGICAL RELIEF. I KNOW I HAVE TO BE  
DESTROYED. I WAS A MISTAKE OF NATURE”**

**ANDREI CHIKATILO**





**RIGHT** For Russia, this case was practically unheard of. When Chikatilo was brought to court, a cage was erected especially to contain the killer, whose volatility had everyone on edge

**BOTTOM** Chikatilo was brought to trial in April 1992 for the murder of 53 (he would be convicted of 52) and sexual assault of five. Facing the maniac for the first time, family members of his victims broke down in tears

**BOTTOM RIGHT** The trial proceedings were carried out at the Rostov Provincial Court and were overseen by Judge Leonid Akubzhanov, who spent the first two days simply reading aloud the charges against Chikatilo

talking to young people, the officer let him go. However, he later spotted Chikatilo soliciting a prostitute for oral sex, and arrested him for indecent behaviour. When his briefcase was examined, it was found to contain a jar of Vaseline, a long kitchen knife, some rope and a dirty towel. The officer was convinced he had caught the killer, but when the blood test results came in, they did not prove a match.

In 1988, a spanner was thrown into the works: new studies showed that the blood type identified from a semen sample did not necessarily match actual blood type. Burakov was in despair. By now the death toll had risen to over 40, and years of hard work had been undone. He needed a new tactic. In 1990, the idea came to him to make surveillance obvious in some stations in order to drive the killer to other locations, where plainclothes officers would be billeted. It was at one of these stations, on 6 November, that a man was seen emerging from a nearby wood. He had blood on his cheek, a cut on his finger and twigs on the back of his coat. An officer took down his name and filed a report.

## OUT OF COMPASSION. A CONFESSION

When chief investigator Issa Kostoyev read the report, a chill ran through his bones. He recognised the name from an earlier report that documented a man's indecent behaviour at a bus stop in Rostov. Kostoyev immediately ordered the arrest of Andrei Chikatilo. On 20 November 1990 he was brought in for interrogation.

Chikatilo was placed in a cell with one of the force's most successful informants, but he failed to withdraw a confession using conventional police techniques. Instead, Kostoyev decided to take matters into his own hands; he used the promise of a legal insanity ruling to lure him to confess. But Chikatilo maintained his plea of innocence. Nine days passed and Kostoyev was beginning to get desperate. On the tenth day he would be legally required to release the suspect – it seemed as though the killer would slip through his fingers once more. So, in a last-ditch effort to close the case, psychiatrist Alexandr Bukhanovsky was brought in to question Chikatilo. Rather than use the brutal and often fallible interrogation tactics that had seen so many innocent men confess, Bukhanovsky's device was sympathy.

As he described to his patient the nature and causes of his mental disorder, cracks began to form in Chikatilo's composure. He began to tremble. Breaking down into a fit of tears, he admitted his guilt in the crimes he had been accused of, and that he was ready to make a formal confession. He remembered the exact details of each of the 36 murders that Kostoyev listed and admitted to a further 20, although only 53 could be corroborated.

In all, he was found guilty of killing 52 girls, boys and women. He would finally be brought to justice, but the truth of the missed opportunities to do so would cause outrage across the nation.

“ WHEN HIS BRIEFCASE WAS EXAMINED, IT WAS FOUND TO CONTAIN A JAR OF VASELINE, A LONG KITCHEN KNIFE, SOME ROPE AND A DIRTY TOWEL ”







# “A MISTAKE OF NATURE”

ANDREI CHIKATILO WAS BORN INTO HARDSHIP AND LEARNED SHAME FROM AN EARLY AGE. COULD HIS EXPERIENCES HAVE FORGED HIM INTO THE RED RIPPER?

Andrei Chikatilo was born on 16 October 1938 in Zolotoyarsky, Ukraine. The great upheaval of the revolution of 1917's revolutionary policies, which caused widespread famine, as well as internal hardship, Chikatilo suffered from a similar tragedy that resulted in extreme hardship. As a child, he was frequently bullied by his mother, as an adult, he was frequently imprisoned, but married a woman, in the meantime that there would never be putting his mother's face in his hands with his fingers.

In 1959, he completed a degree in Russian literature at Moscow University, Russia and began a career as a teacher. It was then that he began sexually abusing his pupils, eventually leading him to the murder of nine-year-old Lina Belenkova in 1976, which proved sexually abusive. In 1977, he was fired following several complaints of child molestation, and started back up a job as a factory security clerk. The only reason he was fired was because of the huge threat to his life following a letter of denunciation from a fellow worker in 1978.



Like much of Russia, Chikatilo had an especially tough childhood under Stalin's regime, as farms were forced to give up land, crops and livestock to the state. He believed his brother had been killed and eaten by his neighbours



# OGRE OF THE ARDENNES

MICHEL FOURNIRET'S SICK FANTASIES WERE MADE A REALITY BY HIS DELUDED DISCIPLE WORDS POPPY J PALMER



“ HE  
WANTED  
YOUNG,  
VIRGINAL  
GIRLS TO  
RAPE AND  
KILL ”

Over 20 years since his last crime, there's still a lot of mystery surrounding French serial killer Michel Fourniret. He was dubbed the 'Ogre of the Ardennes' by the media, but how accurate was that title? Why did he confess? Was he working alone? Just how many lives did he really claim? This far into the puzzle, there's very little left for the police to go on.

His decades-long crime streak began way back in 1966 when he was arrested and found guilty of child molestation. His marriage to his first wife disintegrated shortly after because of it. He was slightly more successful in his next marriage – he fathered three children with his second wife – but it ended as quickly as the first after he was arrested yet again, this time for the rape and indecent assault of minors. The charges against Fourniret were piling up as fast as his wives were ending their relationships. His crimes were accumulating over time and would soon conclude with the worst crime of them all: murder.

## THE WIFE

While Fourniret was in custody awaiting his trial for sexual assault in Paris, 1987, he put an advert in a Catholic magazine, looking for a pen pal. Amazingly, someone replied, a hospital nurse and mother of three named Monique Olivier. The couple continued to exchange letters for a while, before finally meeting at Fourniret's trial, where he was convicted. Like Fourniret, Olivier had a dark past. Unlike him, however, she had been the victim. She had suffered years of abuse at the hand of her former husband. Fourniret empathised with her and together they made a pact that turned into a *Strangers-on-a-Train*-like agreement: he would kill her abusers and she would assist him with the future crimes he was planning to commit.

Many killers have triggers, a motivation for murder, and for Fourniret that trigger was virgins. It's unclear where his fixation started exactly, but a lot can be said of the fact that he had a history of premature ejaculation. According to a survivor of Fourniret's attack, he was a virgin when he married his first wife, but found out on their wedding day that she was not. Perhaps this revelation was what sparked his need to prey on the chaste. Perhaps he was simply dissatisfied with his own sexual prowess. Whatever the case, he cultivated a need to spill blood. First, however, he needed some help, which is where Olivier came in.

After the pact Fourniret and Olivier had made, the former failed to deliver. But that didn't stop Olivier helping her

A photo dated from 1992 of Michel Fourniret, whose horrific crimes earned him the title 'Ogre of the Ardennes'



new husband to orchestrate his next string of crimes. She became Fourniret's virgin hunter. Her new job was to provide him with a selection of 'tight slits,' as he would call them. He wanted young, virginal girls to rape and kill, and Olivier would be the one to bring them to him.

At the end of 1987 and after three and a half years in prison, Fourniret was finally released. He moved in with Olivier not long after, and the pair decided to relocate to Saint-Cyr-les-Colons, where they could settle down together in relative privacy. That was the police's first mistake. The couple weren't being monitored, so they were free to do whatever they wanted. Almost 16 years later, Fourniret confessed to the kidnap, rape and murder of nine girls since being released from prison. He and Olivier were both arrested and convicted. The prosecutors labelled them "a devil with two faces".

### "KILLING SOMEONE. ME? NO."

Fourniret and Olivier began their 14-year-long killing spree just before Christmas 1987. Their first victim was a young girl named Isabelle Laville, who lived in the central French region of Burgundy with her family. There was nothing unusual about Laville that might mark her out; she was just a regular girl with friends and schoolwork, but she disappeared in December 1987 and was never seen alive again. Her family had no idea what had happened to her nearly 20 years later, when her skeletal remains were discovered in Auxerre. After Fourniret's confession in 2004, the true nature of her disappearance came to light: Fourniret and Olivier abducted Laville on her way home from school, luring her into their

car. According to later court documents, Fourniret "grabbed her by the hair and asked her was she a virgin, and she replied in the affirmative." They took time over her, picking her up like a hitchhiker and slipping her a sizable dose of Rohypnol to ensure she would adhere to their plan, whether she wanted to or not. She became the first of several young girls the murderous couple admitted to having abducted and killed.

At 30 years old, Farida Hamiche was Fourniret's oldest victim and the girlfriend of one of Fourniret's cellmates from his stint in prison. His name was Jean-Pierre Hellegouarch, a member of a famous gang of bank robbers known as the 'Gang des postiches' (which translates as the Wigs Gang). Hamiche's life became the price that Fourniret would pay in order to be able to access Hellegouarch's hidden funds. She died at his hands on 12 April 1988, but Fourniret never revealed where he had buried her. He then bought Chateau de Sautou with the money.



Monique Olivier helped Fourniret with his evil desires, luring the victims to their peril

An aerial photo of Fourniret's chateau in Northern France, on the Belgian border

**INSET** After searching the grounds, investigators eventually discovered the burial place of several of Fourniret's victims





Next was Fabienne Leroy, a student from Belgium who had moved to France to complete an internship in Châlons-en-Champagne. While she was running errands at a supermarket, Leroy was abducted from the car park and never seen again. Like with Laville, Fourniret and Olivier lured her into their car; they disclosed details of their plan during the trial. They pretended Olivier was pregnant and near term, and needed treating at the local doctor's office. Leroy offered them help, but instead of following her directions, they raped and murdered her. At first, the pair attempted to inject air into her veins, but when that method failed they turned a gun on Leroy and killed her by shooting her at point-blank range in the heart.

The following year, Fourniret and Olivier claimed another victim. Jeanne-Marie Desramault was raped then murdered. But as Fourniret assaulted her, she desperately insisted that she wasn't a virgin. Predictably, her frantic protests didn't make a difference.

Fourniret kept her body in a freezer for two days after her death, before hiding it on the grounds of the Sautou chateau. Desramault's body was not found, but rather recovered by police in July 2004 once her killer had confessed to the murder and disclosed where he had hidden her remains all those years ago.

The confession led to a wider investigation in which police prepared to dig up a large patch of woodland near the French-Belgian border, looking for more bodies. They had reason to believe that up to a dozen girls and women might have been killed.

Desramault's murder was also a strange one in terms of keeping with Fourniret and Olivier's pattern. Hers was the only murder that Olivier was charged with throughout their trial. For the rest of the victims, Olivier was separately charged with complicity in murder and kidnapping. But in court, Olivier denied having directly murdered anyone. She said, "I know I witnessed terrible things, but killing someone, me? No."

Three more bodies would be found over a decade after they had been killed. They belonged to three young women who had been murdered just before the final victim and before Fourniret and Olivier's arrest. That supposed final kill was of a 16-year-old girl who worked for the two killers as an au pair. Olivier later revealed that her husband had murdered her at some point in 1993. However, the au pair's body was never recovered and the accusation never confirmed. The girl's identity – if she ever even existed – remains a mystery to this day.

After the dedication and commitment Olivier showed towards her husband during his murdering spree, her reaction to his arrest was very peculiar. When Fourniret's confessions got too hot for her to handle, she denounced him, insisting she was less of a part in the ongoing plot as she appeared to be. In actual fact, she had been spooked by the prospect of serving a prison sentence after hearing about the Marc Dutroux case. Dutroux and his wife Michelle Martin were put on trial the very same year. Dutroux was a serial killer, rapist, child molester and kidnapper who had tortured and sexually abused six young girls, murdering four of them. Although Martin hadn't been directly involved with some of the nastier activities, she had been tried as an accomplice and sentenced to 30 years.

Fourniret had finally been arrested on 26 June 2003, after a botched kidnapping attempt. The following year he would confess to nine cases of kidnap, rape and murder. He was

# THE VICTIMS

DUMPED IN WOODS, ON A BEACH, IN A WELL, BURIED: BODIES WERE FOUND EVERYWHERE BUT THE METHOD MURDER WAS THE SAME

## FARIDA HAMMICHE

The eldest of Fourniret's victims, Farida was 30 years old and the wife of Fourniret's cellmate, Jean-Pierre Hellegouarch, a former bank robber. She enlisted Fourniret to help her find Hellegouarch's buried treasure, but once found, Fourniret killed her and took it all.

## MARIE-ANGÈLE DOMÈCE

Known as the 'invisible victim', 18-year-old Marie-Angèle disappeared in July 1988 and was reported missing by her foster family. After eight months, the investigation into her disappearance was closed due to lack of evidence. In 2018, Fourniret confessed to her abduction and murder.





**“WHEN FOURNIRET’S CONFESSIONS GOT TOO HOT FOR HER TO HANDLE, SHE DENOUNCED HIM... SHE HAD BEEN SPOOKED BY THE PROSPECT OF A PRISON SENTENCE”**



### JOANNA PARRISH

Having moved to Auxerre for her year abroad whilst studying French at the University of Leeds, 20-year-old student Joanna's brutalised body was found in May 1990. It wasn't until 2018 that Fourniret confessed to killing her, but he died before he could stand trial.

### ESTELLE MOUZIN

In January 2003, nine-year-old Estelle disappeared on her way home from school. Despite extensive media coverage, the investigation into her disappearance stagnated. It wasn't until 2020 when Olivier—and, later, Fourniret—confessed to her abduction and murder. Her body was never found.



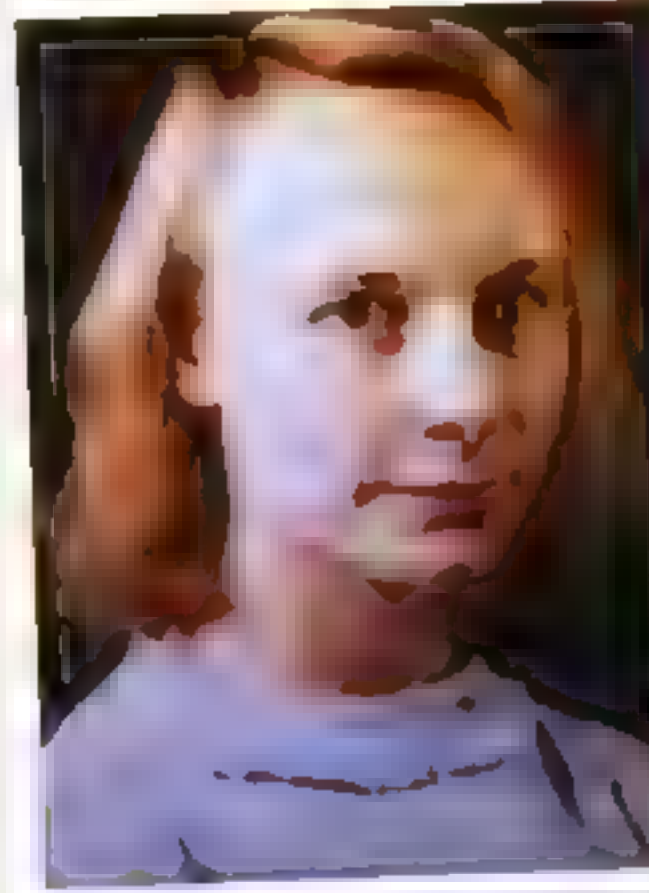
### ISABELLE LAVILLE

Their first victim lived in Burgundy and disappeared on 11 December 1987 while walking from school. 17-year-old Laville had long brown hair, which was why Olivier had chosen her: her husband wanted virgins who represented his wife. Her skeleton was found in July 2006 at the bottom of a well.



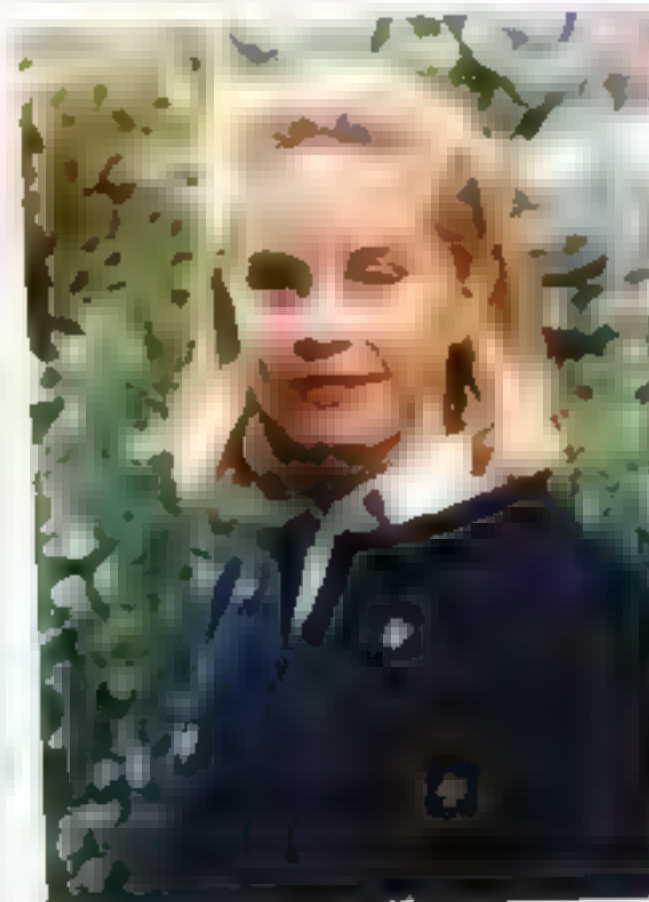
### FABIENNE LEROY

Fabienne was a 20-year-old student from Belgium. She was abducted by Fourniret and Olivier from a supermarket car park on 3 August 1988. They drove her to a quiet spot in a nearby forest before raping and murdering her. Her body was found near French military camp Mourmelon-le-Grand.



### JEANNE-MARIE DESRAMAULT

Jeanne-Marie was a 22-year-old who disappeared from Charleville-Mézières railway station on 18 March 1989. Her body was recovered by police once Fourniret had confessed and revealed that he had hidden her remains on his estate.



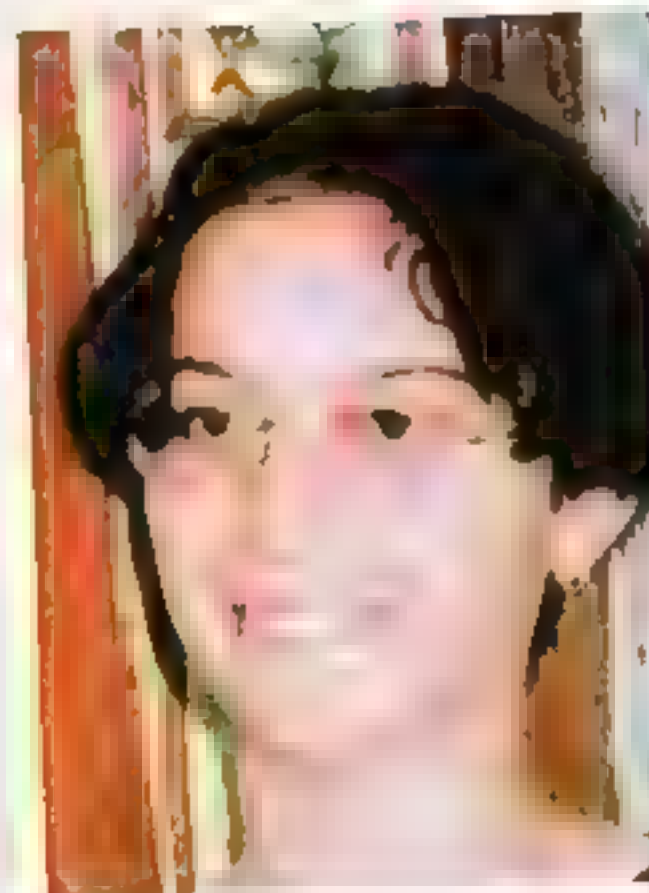
### ELISABETH BRICHET

12-year-old Elisabeth Brichet was a Belgian girl who went missing from Namur in 1989 and her body was finally recovered from its burial site on Fourniret's estate in 2004. Fourniret's wife was charged with complicity to her murder.



### NATACHA DANAIS

Natacha was 13 when she disappeared from Nantes in November 1990 while out shopping with her mother and was found dead on a beach just a few days later. Once again, Olivier was charged with being an accomplice to the crime.



### CÉLINE SAISON

Céline Saison was taken from Charleville-Mézières on 16 May 2000 after a high school exam; she was killed on a country road before the 18-year-old's body was dumped in a Belgian wood near his house and found two months later.



### MANYANA THUMPONG

The 13-year-old schoolgirl disappeared from Sedan on 5 May 2001 and a year later she too showed up dead in Belgium, in the Nollevaux forest. Strangely, Fourniret admitted kidnap and murder but denied raping her.



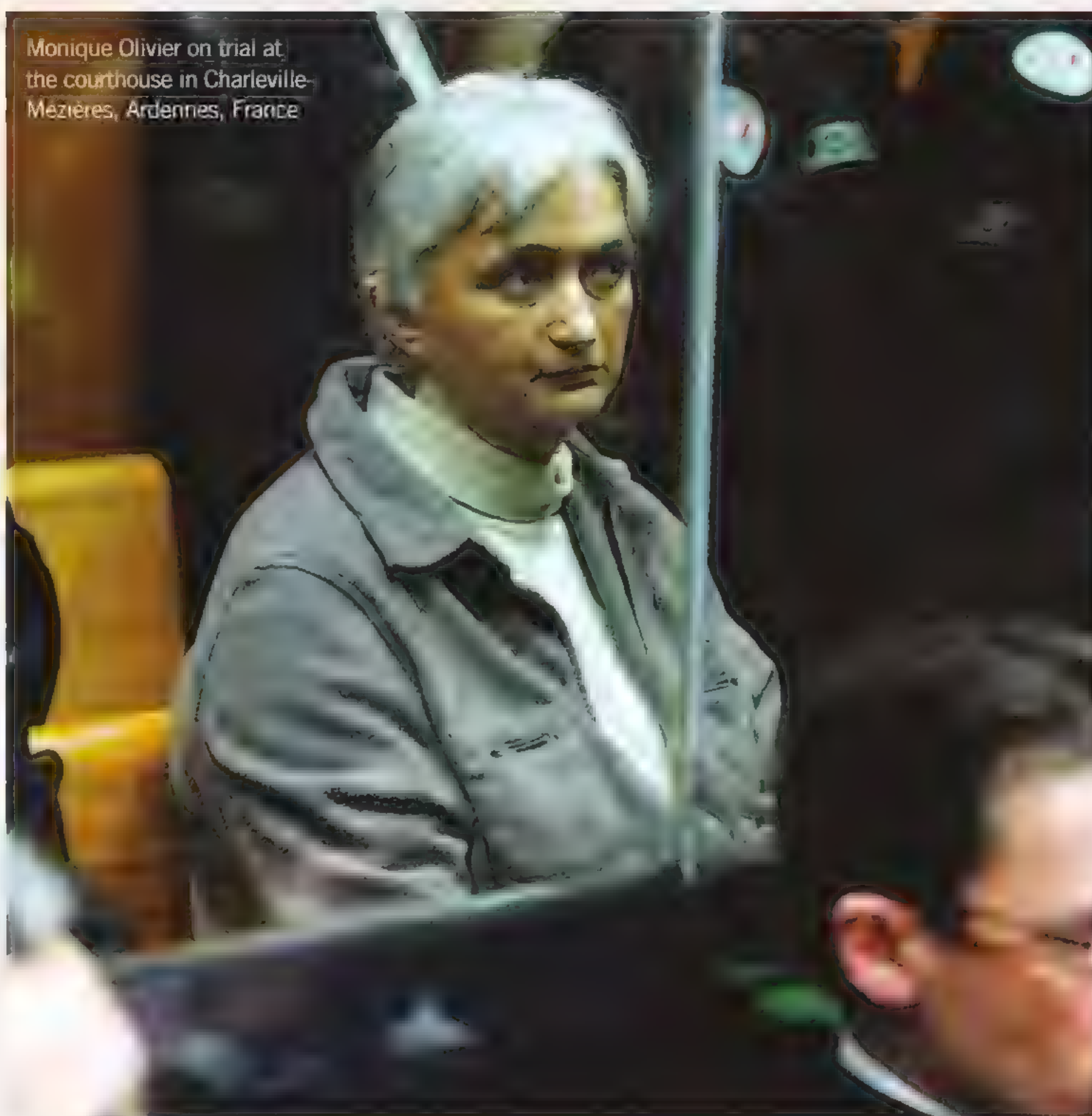
sentenced to life in prison. Olivier was eventually charged with one murder and assisting Fourniret with six others.

## LOOSE ENDS

Fourniret's confession seems like it ought to be the end of his story, but some things still don't add up. Firstly, he was adamant he did not commit any crimes between 1990 and 2000, but police across France, Belgium, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands have since gathered evidence to suggest otherwise, including sketch artist drawings made during rape investigations that look startlingly like Fourniret.

However, DNA tests surrounding these accusations have never proved anything conclusively. Plus, if Fourniret had been guilty, you could ask why he wouldn't confess to these crimes along with the rest of them? But the motives of serial killers are never clear, and if there's one thing we've learned from notorious killers like Gary Ridgway and Richard Ramirez, knowledge is the only power they have over anyone once they have been caught. Perhaps by holding onto the knowledge of the remote final resting places of his other victims, or by denying any involvement in the murder of others, Fourniret retains some control over the authorities responsible for his state of utter powerlessness.

Along with those he did confess to, Fourniret was suspected of ten additional murders, including nine in France and one in Belgium. He was found guilty of seven of them, but the other three were left hanging with no explanation. There were also rumours of him being the real murderer of eight-year-old Marie-Dolorès Rambla, who was kidnapped and stabbed to death on 3 June 1974. The man who was convicted for the crime, Christian Ranucci, was guillotined for it in 1976, but decades later people are still questioning whether Ranucci was the right man. Ranucci confessed, he knew where the murder weapon was hidden, and a pair of pants covered in blood of the same type as Rambla was found in his car, but evidence has since emerged that proved Fourniret was holidaying in Marseille (where the murder took place) that same summer. He also had the same colour car as Ranucci, was the same age as him, and, unlike Ranucci, had a record of sex offenses. Even more strange is that none



The collection of deadly items that was used as evidence in the Michel Fourniret case



## THE ELUSIVE FACTS OF THE CASE

Michel Fourniret from Sedan, France, made headlines when he confessed to the rape, kidnap and murder of nine girls over a period of 14 years in 2004. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to life, but since then new evidence has emerged that suggests his confession wasn't entirely truthful.

It's impossible to know for sure what exactly Fourniret is guilty of without more facts, and he certainly isn't going to share any information, as he died in 2021. But there is one person left who could shed some light on the subject: his wife, Monique Olivier, who helped him hunt virgins to rape and kill.

We do, however, know the details of the nine murders he confessed to: how his victims' bodies were found all over France and Belgium, down wells, in forests, washed up on beaches and buried under the grounds of his estate.

Both Fourniret and Olivier had a terrible way of thinking, but both did at least show signs of regret. Whether that be regret at what they had done or just regret at their life sentences remains unknown to this day.





Arrested in 2003, Fourniret could have killed far more girls than he was convicted of



The van thought to have been used to capture disabled 19-year-old Marie-Angele Domece

**“ IT MAKES NO SENSE FOR FOURNIRET TO CONFESS TO SOME THINGS AND NOT OTHERS IF HE COMMITTED EVERYTHING HE WAS ACCUSED OF ”**

of the witnesses of the kidnapping identified Ranucci as the actual perpetrator, but it's likely we'll never know if this was, in fact, a case of mistaken identity.

### BRITISH CONNECTION

Despite being arrested and sentenced in the early 2000s, fresh evidence on old murders that fit Fourniret's modus operandi still bobs to the surface. The most recent re-emergence of an unsolved case that had Fourniret's hallmarks all over it was the murder of British language student Joanna Parrish. The 20-year-old from Gloucester in England was on a placement at a school in the Burgundy region of France as part of her degree course. She had advertised her services as an English teacher in a local newspaper and disappeared in May 1990, having left one evening for private lessons with a male client. Whether he was Fourniret setting a trap, or whether she was murdered on her way to or from the meeting, is not known.

Joanna turned up in the Yonne River in Auxerre on 17 May. She had been bound, raped and strangled. Her parents, Roger and Pauline, arrived in France three weeks later, after their daughter's

body had been returned to the UK, to try to make sense of her death. Shockingly, they were assured that Joanna had not been raped, only to find out the truth a fortnight later from the coroner. The crime scene had been contaminated by journalists and DNA evidence taken from the scene had, unbelievably, also been lost. Olivier even told detectives that she had witnessed Fourniret rape, murder and dump a young woman into the river, before retracting her confession, claiming it had been extracted under duress. So despite the murder happening at the right time in the right place and with the methodology that Fourniret favoured, putting together a case that pointed the finger at him as the serial killer proved impossible.

As late as May 2015 her family was calling for the French authorities to pursue a new investigation, with a formal request to French magistrates for Monique Olivier to be re-interviewed with the assistance of Gloucestershire Police. Her case was re-opened in 2012 after a tip-off pointed to a 46-year-old, jailed French rapist Thierry Villetard.

Finally, in February 2018, the Parrish family received the closure they had longed for. A lawyer representing the family announced that Fourniret had repeatedly confessed to the murder of Joanna, as well as Marie-Angele Domece, an 18-year-old disabled woman, to a judge. Then in 2020, Fourniret confessed to killing nine-year-old Estelle Mouzin.

In 2021 Fourniret died, and in December 2023 Olivier was sentenced to a second life term for her role in the murders of Joanna and Marie-Angele and the abduction of Estelle.



# THE KILLING 'GAME' OF BTK

THE SERIAL KILLER KNOWN AS BTK TERRORISED WICHITA, KANSAS FOR 30 YEARS. HE WROTE LETTERS TO POLICE AND MEDIA, TEASING THEM WITH DETAILS OF HIS HORRIFIC DEEDS

**D**on Granger was in charge of the tips line at the *Wichita Eagle* and *Beacon* newspapers. It was October 1974, the year the city had been rocked by the murders of a family. The Otero family had been killed – bound and strangled with blind cords – in their home on 15 January. Joseph, 38, wife Julie, 34, son Joseph II, 9, and Josephine, 11, were killed in the morning, after oldest brother Charlie, 15, had gone to school. Josephine was the last to be murdered. "What's going to happen to me?" she asked the man who had entered their home that morning. He replied: "Well, honey, you're going to be in heaven with the rest of your family."

Little did Charlie know as he walked home through the cold, slushy snow streets from school, the horror he would find when he entered the door.

A man in a psychiatric hospital had recently confessed to the crime. The confessor implicated his brother and another man in the killings. Police thought they'd finally caught a break in the case that had shocked the sleepy city that was more like a large town than a bustling state capital. But the three men all had psychiatric histories and police quickly

discounted the confessions. Back to square one. Neighbours had reported seeing one man drive away from the Otero family's driveway at 10.35am on the day of the murders.

One person did not take kindly to someone making claims on the Otero family killings. He called the newspaper tip line and Don Granger answered. The caller told Granger the title of a book at Wichita Public Library, gave him directions on where to find it and said there would be a letter within the pages.

A disturbed Granger contacted the police and gave them the information. The caller was not kidding. The police found a letter within the pages of an engineering textbook. The letter was badly written and poorly spelt but that didn't detract from how shocking its contents were.

## '7 DOWN AND MANY MORE TO GO'

"I write this letter to you for the sake of the taxpayer as well as your time. Those three dude(s) you have in custody are just talking to get publicity for the Otero murders. They know nothing at all. I did it by myself and no ones help... Lets put it straight."

The letter went on to detail the victims, the locations and positions of their bodies within the house including young Josephine who was tragically found hanging by a rope in the basement (the killer had also masturbated over her after she was strangled).

The letter went on: "when this monster enter my brain I will never know, but it here to stay... It is a big complicated game my friend the monster play putting victims number down, follow them, checking up on them, waiting in the dark, waiting, waiting..."

It was in this letter that the writer revealed the moniker BTK, for the method he liked to use on his victims. Bind. Torture. Kill.

In fact, the writer suggested several variations of what he could be called. He felt deserving of a name now that he'd lay claim to seven murders:

**" [HE] REVEALED THE MONIKER BTK FOR THE METHOD HE LIKED TO USE. BIND. TORTURE. KILL "**



A mugshot of Rader taken after his arrest, but did he want to be caught all along?









In 1974 BTK left a letter for police hidden in an engineering book in the Wichita Public Library

"P.S. How about some name for me, its time: 7 down and many more to go. I like the following How about you? 'THE B.T.K. STRANGLER', WICHITA STRANGLER, 'POETIC STRANGLER', 'THE BOND AGE STRANGLER' OR PSYCHO' THE WICHITA HANGMAN THE WICHITA EXECUTIONER, 'THE GARROTE PHANTOM', 'THE ASPHYXIATOR'.

BTK

"P.S. since sex criminals don't change their M.O. or by nature cannot do so, I will not change mine. The code words for me will be...bind them, torture them, kill them B.T.K., you see he at it again. They will be on the next victim."

The letter was not made public. Police feared the town would go into hysteria. They worked with a raft of psychologists to come up with a profile of BTK. The killer had a fetish for bondage. He would be someone who would not attract attention. A loner with a gradually developing fantasy life who would be "wise enough not to show it", one forensic psychiatrist said.

The police department's strategy was to quietly run a classified ad in the *Wichita Eagle* in an effort to reach out to the letter writer.

"BTK

Help is available

Call 684-6321 before 10pm."

The ad ran for four days from 24 October without success. The relationship between the newspaper and police to catch BTK was important. The cops needed the newspaper to "speak" to BTK.

After the classified ad strategy failed, journalist Granger, who took the call from BTK, wrote a column pleading with

the mystery killer to call the number that was listed in the advertisement.

Silence.

But BTK kept on killing, though these dots weren't connected until a few years later. He couldn't help writing letters, taunting police. While the psychological profiles of this man thought he wouldn't attract attention, it seemed the man signing off as BTK wanted to make sure authorities knew he was in charge.

## ATTENTION SEEKER

In February 1978, a letter arrived in the mailbag of television station KAKE. When the mail sorter discovered the letter – and read its disturbing contents – he hurried to the newsroom to show the team the ghoulish message it contained. "How many do I have to kill before I get my name in the paper or some national attention..."

The letter detailed the killing on 8 December 1977, of a young woman named Nancy Fox. Nancy had been found bound and strangled with a cord in her one-storey apartment. And why had her body been found? Police had been led to Nancy's murder by a call... from the killer. At 8:20am on 9 December, a man used a pay phone and called a Wichita police dispatcher. "You will find a homicide at 843 South Pershing. Nancy Fox."

(2)

I'm sorry this happen to the society. They are the ones who suffer the most. It hard to control myself. You probably call me "psychotic with sexual perversion hang-up". When this monster enter my brain I will never know. But, it her to stay. How does one cure himself? If you ask for help, that you have killed four people they will laugh or hit the panic button and call the cops. I can't stop it so, the monster goes on, and but me as well as society. Society can be thankful that there are ways for people like me to relieve myself at time by day dreams of by victim being torture and being mine. It a big complicated game my friend of the monster play putting victims number down, follow them, checking up on them waiting in the dark, waiting, waiting....the pressure is great and some times he run the game to his liking. Maybe you can stop him. I can't. He has already chosed his next victim or victims I don't who they are yet. The next day after I read the paper, I will know, but it to late. Good luck hunting.

YOURS, TRULY GUILTYLY

P.S. Since sex criminals do not change their M.O. or by nature cannot do so, I will not change mine. The code words for me will be... bind them, torture them, kill them, B.T.K., you see he at it again. They will be on the next victim.





## CLOSE CALL WITH DEATH

As Anna Williams enjoyed herself at a square dance, little did she know danger lurked at her home. The 63-year-old widow's late night was to save her life.

On 28 April 1979, BTK broke into Ms Williams' home and lay in wait for her to come home. He had been stalking her and her address for a while and had decided this date was the night she would die. He got into the house through a basement window and he snipped the phone line, as he did with his other victims. He waited for hours, leaving very frustrated at 10pm. When Ms Williams came home she realised someone had been there. When she attempted to call the police the phone was dead. After phoning from a neighbour's house, police arrived and searched the house finding a noose shaped out of wire in the bedroom. A few months later, BTK sent a letter to the address (Williams had been too scared to return there) containing a poem and a pair of her pantyhose he'd stolen on the night. The poem read "Oh Anna Why Didn't You Appear?".

The home of BTK, where he lived a seemingly normal life in stark contrast to his perverse and deadly actions

When it became clear the city had a serial killer on the loose, the police chief Richard LaMunyon made a televised statement to the people of Wichita. This man was claiming to have killed seven people and would not stop. He ordered more police on the streets and told citizens to stay safe. Lock their homes, look out for each other and any suspicious activity in their neighbourhoods.

One of the people listening to the police chief's address was a typist for the *Wichita Eagle*. She recalled a strange little poem a mail clerk had opened and just assumed was for the Valentine's Day classifieds section. She had put it in a special basket because it had no billing address enclosed. The poem began "Shirleylocks, Shirleylocks wilt thou be mine." This was all revealed to the public because when police examined the poem, it was clear BTK was writing about 26-year-old Shirley Vian, a hard-on-her-luck mother of three murdered on 17 March, 1977. The killer had knocked on the door of the family's home in the morning and was let inside by Shirley's six-year-old son. BTK put the terrified children in the bathroom while he killed their mother, wedging the door shut. The children eventually freed themselves. When they got out they found that their mother was dead. There was no sign of the strange man that had been let in. She was found nude, bound, strangled, with a plastic bag over her head on her bed.

The killer craved attention. He even said in one of his letters: "A little paragraph in the newspaper would have been enough." He was taunting police. Did he want to get caught? The man certainly recognised the darkness within and wrote he was driven to kill by a "factor X". In his February 1978 correspondence, BTK compared himself to other killers who'd corresponded with authorities or left notes at their crime scenes: Jack the Ripper, Harvey Glatman, the Son of Sam and The Hillside Strangler (the strangler he was referring to was, in fact, two killers, cousins Kenneth Bianchi and Angelo Buono who weren't captured until 1979). "It seems senseless but we can't help it."

It was an unprecedented situation for Wichita police. They tried to keep quiet about the first letter and prevent more murders. That didn't work. Now the strategy was to speak to the public, which also included the killer. He had teased in one letter that he was in the community, living an otherwise ordinary life.

LaMunyon became obsessed with finding BTK. "It's become a personal thing," LaMunyon told UPI reporter Dan Chiszar for a syndicated article in early 1978. "I feel frustrated. It's the last thing I think of when I go to bed and the first thing I think of when I get up in the morning."

Another flurry of correspondence in 1979 prompted more intense police efforts. A woman BTK had stalked and decided

**"THE KILLER WAS LET INSIDE BY SHIRLEY'S SIX-YEAR-OLD SON. BTK PUT THE TERRIFIED CHILDREN IN THE BATHROOM WHILE HE KILLED THEIR MOTHER"**



# THE MURDER OF NANCY FOX

*A transcript from the trial of Dennis Rader, detailing the killing of Nancy Fox*

JUDGE: Alright, did she come home?

RADER: Yes she did.

JUDGE: What happened?

RADER: I confronted her. I told her that I was a – that I had a problem, a sexual problems – that I had to tie her up and have sex with her. She was a little upset. We talked for awhile and she smoked a cigarette. While we smoked a cigarette, I went through her purse identifying some stuff and she finally said, 'well, let's get this over with so I can go call the police' and I said 'okay' and she said, 'can I go to the bathroom?' And I said 'yes.' She went to the bathroom and came... and I told her that when she came out to make sure that she was undressed. When she came out I handcuffed her and uh...

JUDGE: You handcuffed her? You had a pair of handcuffs?

RADER: Yes sir, uh-huh.

JUDGE: What happened then?

RADER: Well anyway, I handcuffed her, had her lay on the bed. I tied her feet. I was also undressed to a certain degree. And then I got on top of her and reached over, took, either her feet were tied or not tied. But anyway I took... I think I had a belt. I took the belt and I strangled her with the belt at that time.

he would kill had an extremely lucky escape. BTK broke into her home and waited for her but she was out with friends. In the end, BTK got sick of waiting and was frustrated he couldn't carry through his murderous plan. But he let the woman know he had been there. A letter arrived at the address with a poem, a sketch and clothing and jewellery that he had taken. The killer also sent a letter to KAKE who immediately forwarded it unopened to the police.

A tips line was set up to try and flush out BTK. Surely someone must know who this madman was? In another manoeuvre, police sent the recording of the phone call BTK made after the Nancy Fox murder to a professor who specialised in computerised enhancement of audio, which back in the late 1970s was fairly revolutionary. The audio enhanced call was aired on Wichita radio and television stations on 15 August 1979.

They received plenty of phone calls from the public but no firm lead on who the killer could be. It would be the last time police heard from BTK for a quarter of a century. Slowly the

Dennis Rader listening to testimony at the sentencing stage of his trial



spectre of BTK diminished until there were no mention of him in the press by the 1990s.

## HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

What was BTK doing over these years? Was he dead? In jail for another crime? In another state?

The curious and terrifying thing was that BTK was still there. Still in the community. Hiding in plain sight. There were long silences between the 'monster' emerging. BTK took his time. He carefully stalked his victims and was now confident in his methods of prolonged torture.

On 17 January 2004, the *Wichita Eagle* published a story to mark the 30th anniversary of the Otero family killings.

Two days later, the newspaper received a letter. The return address was for a Bill Thomas Killman. It contained a photocopy of the driver's licence of a local woman called Vicki Wegerle. The 28-year-old housewife and mum was murdered in 1986 – strangled in her home in the same fashion as BTK's other victims. However, her murder had not been linked for certain to BTK until the letter. It also



BTK taunted the police by sending them this bound Nancy Fox doll





Wichita Police Detective Sam Houston shows a mask in Dennis Rader's sentencing hearing that was found with Delores Davis' body

## “BTK HAD BECOME A BOGEYMAN. PEOPLE WOULD CHECK THEIR HOMES FOR BROKEN WINDOWS, SOME SLEPT WITH GUNS NEARBY, WOMEN BOUGHT PEPPER SPRAY”

contained crime scene Polaroids taken by the killer. On the day she was killed, Vicki's husband Bill was driving home for lunch to see her and their two-year-old-son when he passed the family's car on the road and it wasn't his wife driving. When he walked into his house, his infant son was sitting by himself on the floor. He called out to his wife and went upstairs where he saw her dead in the bedroom.

It was a painful reminder for the city. The spectre of BTK had terrified many and after so many years there was still curiosity and a little fear about whether the serial killer was still around. BTK had become a bogeyman. People would check their homes for broken windows, some slept with guns nearby, women bought pepper spray. The father of one of BTK's victims, Kathryn Bright, said he thought the killer must have been dead or in jail. “It's up to the police to find him now,” Charles Bright told the *Eagle* for a 27 March 2004 article. Kathryn, 21, was murdered on 4 April 1974, just months after the Otero family. Kathryn's brother Kevin was also at the house – BTK was not expecting anyone else to be there – and the young man was shot but survived.

More communication happened over the next months, with the police encouraging the lines of communication. Ken Landwehr, the homicide unit commander spearheaded

the strategy to appeal to BTK's need for recognition and his obvious desire to talk, show off even. It would prove the undoing of BTK.

### THE END FOR BTK

He sent a word puzzle to KAKE. He left a package for Wichita police in the city's Murdock Park. The package contained Nancy Fox's driver's licence and a Barbie-like doll that was presumably a mini-replica of what he did to his victims – the doll was bound at the hands and feet and had a plastic bag on the head. In June 2004, a note was taped to a stop sign that was an outline of a book called *The BTK Story* where the first chapter was entitled ‘A Serial Killer is Born’. This guy had an ego, he wanted his story to be heard. Like his crimes, BTK put much thought and planning into his “correspondence” though his writing and spelling were poor.

In January 2005 the serial killer used a cereal box to communicate. He left it on the back of a pickup truck in the parking lot of a Home Depot store in Wichita. The vehicle owner's girlfriend who thought it was some rubbish threw the box away. BTK sent another letter to the television station asking what happened to the cereal box.



Police were able to find the box in the trash. Chilling notes were found inside about some of BTK's planned murders. There was also a question for the police, which would turn out to be the most pivotal piece of communication between authorities and BTK. "Can I communicate with floppy and not be traced to a computer. Be honest..." BTK wanted police to place a classified in *The Wichita Eagle* with the response "Rex, it will be OK". This would let BTK know if he could safely use a "floppy" for further communication.

It could be argued that for someone who was very patient and methodical about killing, writing to the police on a computer disc was a pretty stupid act. BTK inserted a disk into the computer at Christ Lutheran Church and printed some documents that would be sent to the police. Naively, BTK trusted there could be no trace of him from the disk but police must have rubbed their hands with glee when the latest envelope from the killer came.

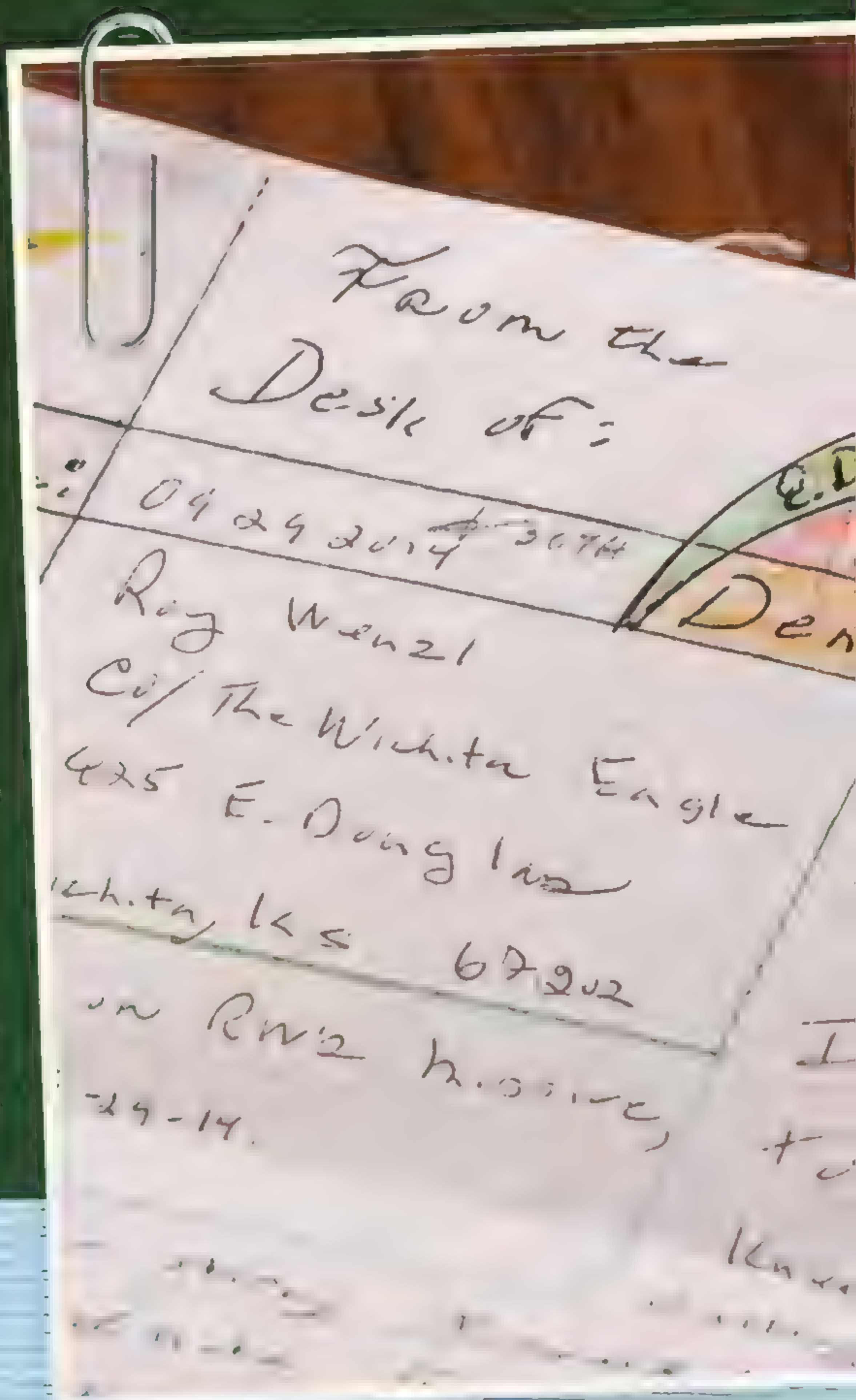
The disk revealed a name – Dennis – and the name of the places the disk had been used – Christ Lutheran Church and a library. All it took was a simple internet search to reveal that there was a Dennis linked to the church – Dennis Rader was the president of the Christ Lutheran Church congregation. The case was building but it wasn't enough; police needed hard evidence. The team weren't able to walk up to Rader and ask him for a DNA sample. For one, he could decline and then Rader would know he was under suspicion. Police discovered Rader's daughter had been in hospital for a pap smear and they got an urgent court order

to get the sample to test against the unidentified DNA from under the fingernails of one of BTK's victims. The swift results showed a familial match and that gave police the go-ahead to arrest Rader.

## THE ARREST

The Rev Michael Clark was leaving the church to tend to church business on 25 February 2005, when an official-looking man in a black trench coat approached him. The man identified himself as a police lieutenant and had several other colleagues with him. The men asked to speak to Rev Clark inside and revealed they had a search warrant for the premises. What could the police possibly want to search the church for? Then the shock of his life came for Rev Clark, described as a "quiet man of God" by his congregation.

Police were searching the church in connection to the BTK serial murders and they believed a man called Dennis Rader was their primary suspect.



For his first court appearance, Rader appeared via video feed from the Sedgwick County Jail on 1 March 2005

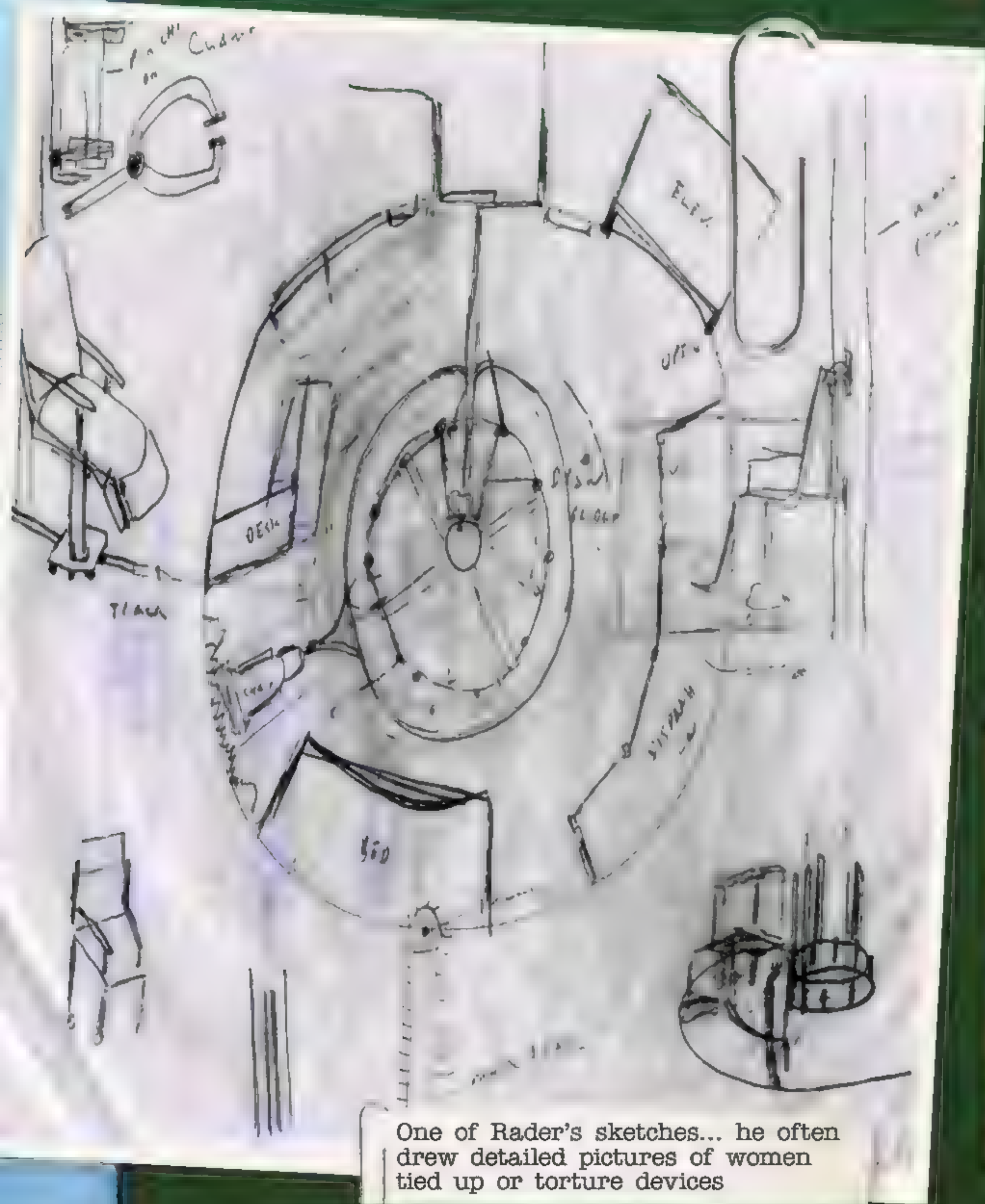




A letter Rader wrote from his cell, where he references the news that Stephen King has penned a novel using the killings of BTK as an inspiration.

2014  
D.L. Rader  
Dennis L. Rader  
Dear Mr. Wenzel,  
Received your informative letter today. Thank you.  
I knew a rumormongering was going on.  
Writing, I think is a long process.

Letter #:  
RW-14-01-01-WTA



One of Rader's sketches... he often drew detailed pictures of women tied up or torture devices

Thanks to Serial Killer Culture for the sketch & letter images used in this article [www.serialkillerculture.com](http://www.serialkillerculture.com)



Rader, a 60-year-old married father of two, was arrested the same day. He was a city officer, a former Boy Scout leader, ex-security alarm installer and heavily involved in his church. In the police interrogation room when confronted with the floppy disk evidence and DNA match, the floodgates opened and Rader spoke for a staggering 30 hours detailing his life and crimes to the detectives.

"You know why you're here?" asked one of the detectives. Rader replied, "I assume it's about BTK."

Officers: "Would you be surprised to know that the father of your daughter is BTK? Tell us who you are."

Rader: "I'm BTK. You got me."

In another extraordinarily candid interview with Harvard-trained forensic psychologist Robert Mendoza (Mendoza was hired by Rader's defence team to determine whether he was legally sane to enter a plea), Rader explained exactly how he came to kill. Rader revealed he fancied himself a director. He was a watcher. He was a stickler for routine and rules. The watching was the most exciting part. The discovery, the planning, the "trolling". He had his self-described "Hit Kit" of plastic bags, rope, tape, knife and gun that he'd take to carry out his unspeakable crimes.

"The stalking stage is when you start learning more about your victims, your potential victims. Went to the library, looked up their names, address, cross referenced, called them a couple of times, drove by there whenever I could..." Rader told Mendoza. "I got this fantasy... I started working out this fantasy in my mind. Once that person becomes a fantasy I could just loop it over, I'd lay in bed at night and thinking about this person, the offence and how it's going to happen. It became a reel, almost like a picture show. I want to go ahead and produce it, direct it and go through with it no matter what the cost were; the consequences..." he continued.

"I think I am actually possessed with demons. I was dropped on the head when I was a kid... something drove me to do this. Normal people don't do this..."

On 27 June 2005, which was to be the first day of his trial, Rader pleaded guilty to the 10 murders. He is in prison in Kansas and eligible for release in 2180 but obviously, will die while he is locked away.

Rader's attorney, Steve Osburn, spoke of his client's "quirky traits". When two *Penthouse* magazines were shown to the court during preliminary court appearances as part of the items found in Rader's shed, he leapt out of his seat and demanded an objection. "He didn't have a problem with dead bodies and the other photos [of his victims and bondage and torture] but he objected to a little legal porn?" Osburn told the *Observer-Reporter* newspaper.

## THE AFTERMATH

Rader continued to court the press and actually confessed he was planning to kill again and had started to stalk his next victim. "There was probably one more," he revealed in a phone interview with a Kansas television anchor. "I was really thinking about it, but I was beginning to slow down age-wise my 'thinking' process, so it probably would have never went. It was probably more of an ego thing."

Lieutenant Landwehr, who passed away in 2014 from cancer at age 59, recalled he was astonished during the lengthy confession that Rader was most upset police had lied to him about the floppy disk.

"I was trying to catch you," Landwehr told Rader.

"But we had such a good thing going. You and I had that rapport," Rader replied.



# CHRONICLE OF A KILLER

THE HUNTING AND DUMPING GROUNDS OF BTK, WHOSE DESPERATE NEED FOR ATTENTION LED HIM TO CORRESPOND WITH POLICE AND MEDIA



## VICKI WEGERLE

On 16 September 1986, Vicki Wegerle, 28 is strangled at her home. Suspicion initially fell on her husband for the murder.



## KATHRYN BRIGHT

On 4 April 1974, Kathryn Bright, 21, is stabbed at her home on 3217 E. 13th St. Kathryn's young brother was shot but survived.

DENNIS RADER'S HOUSE

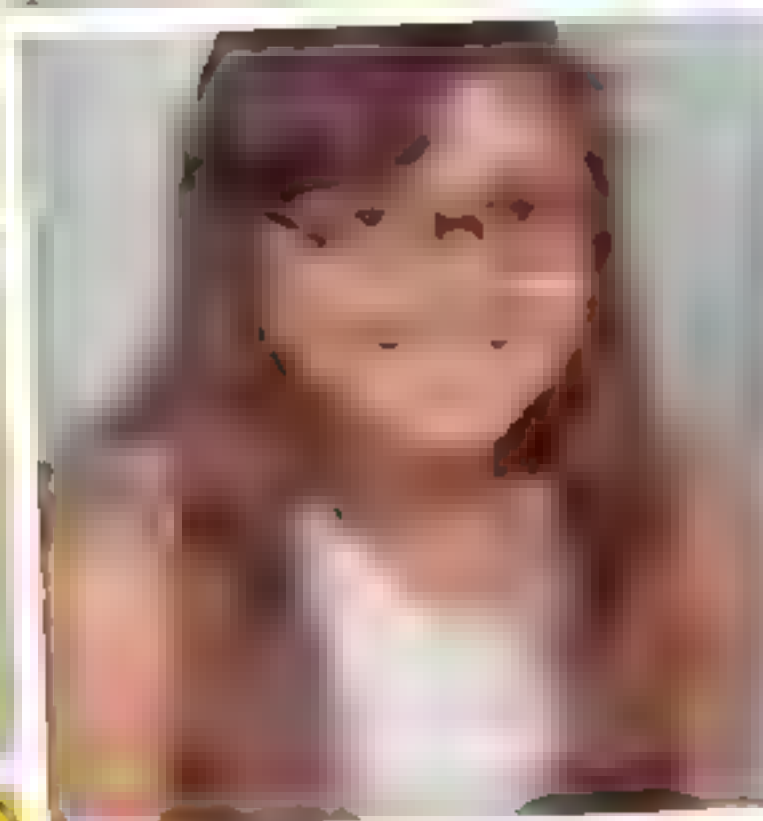
PARK CITY

WICHITA



## SHIRLEY VIAN

On 17 March 1977, Shirley Vian is strangled at 1311 S. Hydraulic while her children were locked in the bathroom.



## OTERO FAMILY

On 15 January 1974, four members of the Otero family – parents Joseph and Julie and two of their children age 9 and 11 are strangled at 803 N. Edgemoor.



## NANCY FOX

On 8 December 1977, Nancy Fox, 25, is strangled at her duplex apartment at 843 S. Pershing.



USA

KANSAS

135

KECHI



DOLORES DAVIS

On 19 January 1991, Dolores Davis vanishes from her home at 6226 N. Hillside. Her body isn't found until almost a fortnight later, ten miles away.



MARINE HEDGE

On 27 April 1985, Marine Hedge, 53, disappears from her home at 6254 Independence. Her body is found eight days later near 53rd North and Webb Road.

MAP KEY

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 - KAKE TV<br>A note was delivered detailing the murder of Nancy Fox  | details only the murderer would know |
| 2 - KSAS TV<br>A floppy disk sent to KSAS TV led to Rader's eventual capture   |                                      |
| 3 - WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY<br>Rader hid a note in an engineering book in the library, taking credit for the killings of the Otero family and revealing |                                      |
| 4 - SEDGWICK COUNTY COURT<br>Rader received 30 life sentences after admitting his crimes in court  |                                      |
| 5 - WICHITA EAGLE<br>After years of silence, the Wichita Eagle received a letter from 'Bill Thomas Killman' in 2004                                    |                                      |

**"BTK TOOK HIS TIME. HE CAREFULLY STALKED HIS VICTIMS AND WAS NOW CONFIDENT IN HIS METHODS OF PROLONGED TORTURE"**

A KILLER BEGINS – A FAMILY IS MURDERED

*A transcript from the trial of Dennis Rader, detailing the murder of the Otero family*

JUDGE: Alright, what did you do to Joseph Otero?

RADER: Joseph Otero?

JUDGE: Joseph Otero Senior, Mr. Otero, the father.

RADER: I put a plastic bag over his head and then some cords and tightened it.

JUDGE: This was in the bedroom?

RADER: Yes sir.

JUDGE: Did he in fact suffocate and die as a result of this?

RADER: Not right away. No sir, he didn't.

JUDGE: What happened?

RADER: Well, after that, I did Mrs. Otero. I had never strangled anyone before so I really didn't know how much pressure you had to put on a person or how long it would take. But...

JUDGE: Was she also tied up there?

RADER: Yes, uh-huh. Both their hands and their feet were tied up.

JUDGE: Where were the children?

RADER: Well, Josephine was on the bed and Junior was on the floor at this time.

JUDGE: So, we're talking about first of all about Joseph Otero. So you put the bag over his head and tied it. And he did not die right away. Can you tell me what happened in regards to Joseph Otero.

RADER: He moved over real quick like and, I think, tore a hole in the bag and I could tell he was having some problems there. But at that time the whole family just went, uh, they went panicked on me so I worked pretty quick.

JUDGE: You worked pretty quick. What did you do?

RADER: Well, I mean I strangled Mrs. Otero and she went out, or passed out. I thought she was dead. She passed out. Then I strangled Josephine. She passed out, or I thought she was dead. And then I went over and put a bag on Junior's head. And then, if I remember right, Mrs. Otero came back. She came back and...

JUDGE: Let me ask you about Joseph Otero Senior. You indicated he had torn a hole in the bag. What did you do with him then?

RADER: I put another bag over it. Either that or, I recollect, I put a cloth or a T-shirt over it, over his head, then another bag.







# ADDICTED TO MURDER

‘CHESSBOARD KILLER’ ALEXANDER PICHUSHKIN SIMPLY LOVED TO KILL. HIS VICTIMS WERE JUST PAWNS IN HIS GAME TO BECOME THE MOST PROLIFIC SERIAL KILLER IN RUSSIA

WORDS TANITA MATTHEWS

**B**itsa Park spans some 18 square kilometres across the southern area of Moscow. Concealed by dense trees and shrubbery, it is one of Russia’s biggest parks, and hundreds of people walk through it every day. For 14 years, the sheltered nooks of the beautiful park, surrounded by a concrete city, shielded the depraved acts of a maniac, a man whose savage hunger for murder was insatiable. The killer became a phantom of the park; children were forbidden from going into it alone and even adults were wary of the unknown entity responsible for picking people off one by one. Collecting enough lives to mark off nearly every square of the 64 found on a chessboard, Alexander Pichushkin was unstoppable, luring the helpless and the vulnerable into his leaf-laden lair and subjecting them to a painful and grisly end, leaving many a victim with a vodka bottle protruding from their brain. Russia’s elite criminal investigation unit knew there was a serial killer lurking in their midst, but had no idea that he was so bloodthirsty. He just couldn’t stop himself from killing.

## HIS FIRST TIME

Serial killers as violent as Pichushkin often attribute their behaviour to equally violent childhoods: memories of torturing animals or abuse at the hands of loved ones leading to their sexual gratification from the most macabre of scenes. Pichushkin’s childhood, by all accounts, was fairly normal. Born in Moscow in 1974, he grew up in Khersonskaya Street, a four-building neighbourhood complex adjacent to the scene of his future murders. He lived with his mother – his father had left when he was barely a year old. Described as a ‘social’

**“LIFE WITHOUT KILLING IS LIKE LIFE WITHOUT FOOD”**



child, there seemed no forewarning of extreme behaviour. However, at the age of four, Pichushkin suffered a head injury when he fell backwards off of a swing and was then struck in the forehead by the seat. The heavy knock is thought to have damaged his brain's frontal cortex, the area that controls impulse regulation and aggression. From then on, those who knew him noticed a change in the young boy's behaviour, and he became irrational and hostile. His mother transferred him from a mainstream school to one for children with learning difficulties, and although this was intended to help, it actually hindered Pichushkin's development. His former classmates bullied him and referred to him as "that retard," serving as a catalyst for his aggression.

Despite Pichushkin's brain injury, his grandfather believed him to be highly intelligent and disliked the idea that his school focused so heavily on smoothing out the edges of his disability and less on advancing him academically. The pair lived together for a period of time, during which Pichushkin learned how to play chess. His talent for logical thinking served him well and he went on to play exhibition games in Bitsa Park. Still tormented by the children from the mainstream school, he learned to channel his aggression into chess. His grandfather, who had been his mentor and his confidant, died in 1988. Heartbroken and consumed by loss, Pichushkin moved back into his mother's house and enrolled as a college student. The pain of his grandfather's death was drowned in vodka and channelled into chess.

While still a student on 27 July 1992, 18 year-old Pichushkin committed his first murder, by pushing Mikhail Odichuk down a well in Bitsa Park. The pair had been classmates and Pichushkin had invited Odichuk on a killing expedition, but when he realised that his friend had no intentions to actually kill anyone, he turned on him, smashing his head with a hammer and dumping the body down the drain. The police questioned him about Odichuk's death but it was eventually ruled as suicide. As alarming and cold-blooded as the act was, Pichushkin would later look back on that day and remember it fondly. He was untouched by remorse and despair, instead feeling nostalgia and longing: "This first murder, it's like first love, it's unforgettable," he later said in court.

Around the time of Pichushkin's first murder, Russia was recovering from the shock of the brutal slayings committed by Andrei Chikatilo, otherwise known as the Red Ripper. The deep sexual gratification that Chikatilo received from his acts, such as slicing a women's abdomen open and biting another's nipple off, saw him kill more than 50 women and children, making him Russia's most notorious serial killer. When police raided Pichushkin's home, they found newspaper clippings about Chikatilo among his possessions. Media speculation ramped up during Pichushkin's six-week trial, reporting that he had been inspired by Chikatilo in his mass murders. Although Pichushkin did not kill again for nine years after Odichuk's death, Chikatilo sprang back to the forefront of his mind in 2001.

## DESTROYING THE EVIDENCE

For almost a decade Pichushkin settled into a normal life, working as a shelf stacker in a supermarket and trying but failing to maintain relationships with women. Neighbours regarded him as a bit of a loner but the people he saw on a daily basis remember him as a good person, capable of empathy and feeling. However, few were aware that Pichushkin liked to drink heavily.



Although Russia has a moratorium on the death penalty and has not executed anyone since 1996, the Chessboard Killer's crimes sparked a nationwide debate for the death penalty to be given

**"THE CLOSER THE PERSON IS TO YOU, THE MORE PLEASANT IT IS TO KILL HIM"**

His murderous desire reignited in May 2001 when he killed Yevgeny Pronin. Fresh out of his hiatus, the murders followed a similar modus operandi: Pichushkin stalked his victims, usually homeless men walking through Bitsa Park, before striking up conversation with his prey. After luring them with the promise of vodka or beer, their 'impromptu' walk would eventually lead them deep into the forest to one of Pichushkin's chosen sewer drains. Awaiting the victims on the other side was a nine-metre drop into the city's labyrinth of a sewerage system, where the water flow was so fierce it could rip a human cadaver apart in seconds. Once at the drain, Pichushkin would propose a toast to his dead dog, which he had lost some years earlier and allegedly buried at the site, before the victims were delivered a swift blow to the head. If the force of the strike didn't kill them, then the drop into the darkened pit would. The victims' remains would sometimes turn up at the wastewater-treatment centre eight





kilometres away from the scene of the crime but, to begin with, no alarm was raised. However, some of Pichushkin's victims were never seen again.

During the eight weeks following Pronin's murder, nine more victims followed him into the sewers. Victor Volkov was killed in July, and by the end of the year, Pichushkin had thrown five more bodies into the darkened drains.

The following year, the killer, whose murders were now occurring more frequently, was very nearly discovered. In February 2002, Pichushkin met pregnant Maria Viricheva. She had argued with her boyfriend and was wondering the streets alone when she was approached by Pichushkin. He told her that he had some cameras hidden in Bitsa Park that she could have to sell, so that she could get some money together. Viricheva followed what she thought was a Good Samaritan into the bushes where Pichushkin ripped off the cover to a drain and told her to look inside. With Viricheva standing dangerously close to the edge, Pichushkin struck like a deadly snake from behind, pushing her down the darkened well. Unlike the many victims before her, she survived the fall but was trapped for 20 hours, trying to feel her way out from the watery grave Pichushkin had thrown her into. She eventually crawled out and reported her ordeal to the police. However, despite hearing of the maniac who had tried to kill a pregnant woman in Bitsa Park, they were only interested in seeing her registration papers. Viricheva, like millions of people living in Russia, resided there illegally

**ABOVE** Bitsa Park in Moscow is more than three times bigger than Central Park in New York. It is a popular meeting place among homeless men from the city

# PICHUSHKIN'S BOARD

HE WANTED TO FILL EACH SQUARE WITH A VICTIM, BUT MANY REMAIN UNCONFIRMED

1 MIKHAIL ODICHUK Age: 18 Date attacked: 27 July 1992	2 YEVGENY PRONIN Age: 52 Date attacked: 17 May 2001	6 NIKOLAY PHILLIPOV Age: 73 Date attacked: 29 June 2001
11 VIKTOR VOLKOV Age: unknown Date attacked: 21 July 2001	16 MARIA VIRICHEVA Age: 20 Date attacked: 23 February 2002 survived	19 ALEKSEY FEDOROV Age: 42 Date attacked: 8 March 2002
27 LYANG FATKULIN Age: 74 Date attacked: 13 March 2003	30 OLEG BOYAROV Age: unknown Date attacked: 6 April 2003	34 EGOR KUDRYAVCEV Age: 42 Date attacked: 30 August 2003
35 VLADIMIR FOMIN Age: unknown Date attacked: 14 October 2003	36 VLADIMIR FEDOSOV Age: 44 Date attacked: 14 November 2003	37 KONSTANTIN POLIKARPOV Age: 27 Date attacked: 15 November 2003 survived
38 ANDREY MASLOV Age: unknown Date attacked: 8 June 2005	39 YURIY KUZNECOV Age: unknown Date attacked: 28 September 2005	41 NIKOLAI ZAKHARCHENKO Age: 63 Date attacked: 16 November 2005
44 NIKOLAY KORYAGIN Age: 72 Date attacked: 6 December 2005	49 STEPAN VASILCHENKO Age: unknown Date attacked: 4 March 2006	52 MARINA MOSKALYEVA Age: 36 Date attacked: 14 June 2006





**LEFT** Unknown to Marina Moskalyeva, as her co-worker walks alongside her to the park for a picnic, he carries with him a hammer in his bag ready to strike



**“FOR THE RECORD, I WANTED TO KILL AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE AND TO BEAT CHIKATILO’S RECORD”**

## BRIDE OF PICHUSHKIN

Although Pichushkin is serving life behind bars for his crimes, his life did not stop there. He received dozens of letters from female fans and one in particular stood out from the crowd. Calling herself Natalya Pichushkin, the 29-year-old admits that the pair have been corresponding through love letters since 2009. She was just 22 and recovering from a broken relationship when she first wrote to him. Her former husband allegedly abused and cheated on the striking blonde, who works in a children's shop in Nyagan in Western Siberia.

When she saw Pichushkin on television, she said it was “love at first sight”. She confessed her love after a couple of years. When the Chessboard Killer proposed, she readily accepted his offer to become his bride. However, the pair now claim that their letters have been stopped by authorities and that they have been without a word from each other for two years. The only way she can see his face is to look at the black and white tattoo of her beau she has on her forearm, with his infamous chessboard of death inked underneath his face.

and had no papers to produce. Police told her that if she kept quiet about the attack then they would not pursue her ‘immigrant’ status and, therefore, she declined to take the attempted murder charges any further.

The chance to catch Pichushkin came again when, two weeks later, one of his youngest victims was attacked. 13-year-old Mikhail Lobov narrowly escaped when his jacket caught on a piece of metal inside the drain, allowing him to climb out and run to police. But once again they took little notice, even when Lobov ran into his attacker again a week later and began to assault him in anger. The traumatised youth clawed at Pichushkin, shouting to the police that they had to do something. Instead they told the young boy to leave. Up to 40 victims disappeared before police began to pay attention to the murderer in the park.

Pichushkin’s inner turmoil was mounting – he wanted recognition, notoriety and respect, but his bid to remain undetected by throwing his victims in a drain meant that he had concealed his crime almost too well. So he became reckless. In October 2005, police found the body of a man in the woods with his brain strewn on the ground next to his body and a vodka bottle protruding from his gaping head wound. This was the first of many bodies to be discovered under the shallow earth of Bitsa Park, each one with a stick or the neck of a vodka bottle embedded into their skulls. The killing became more sporadic and Pichushkin took less care covering up the bodies. The following month, 63-year-old Nikolai Zakharchenko was found in the woods, and it was clear from his injuries that he too had been murdered by the same person. Another body was found two weeks later with similar injuries, and another just a week after that. By Christmas, seven mutilated bodies had been discovered in the park. None of the victims had been robbed and all were partly concealed in the mud and snow and between the trees of the park. A local doctor found a man’s decomposed body while he was walking his dog. He spotted a wild dog gnawing at a bone that he knew all too well was human, and a body was found a short distance away by the side of a stream.

## THE BITSA PARK MANIAC

With bodies turning up at every corner of the park, the police began the hunt for a serial killer, and it didn’t take long for the news to hit the headlines. Moscow’s elite murder squad took on the task of solving the crimes that had the community quaking in fear. Dubbed the Bitsa Maniac, Pichushkin left few clues to his identity: no fingerprints could be found at the site, and the police faced a huge challenge.

Forensic experts determined that the murder weapon likely to have caused such extensive injuries was a hammer with an angled edge. A psychiatric sanatorium on the outskirts of Bitsa Park fell under suspicion. It was common knowledge that some patients were allowed day release to the park and speculation pointed the finger at a dangerous patient. Police also began to conduct stop and searches of people acting suspiciously in the park.

A man who was thought to fit the description of the killer was bombarded by 200 police officers in Bitsa Park in February. When officers detained the suspect, he pulled a knife on them and broke free from his handcuffs. When he tried to flee, the officers shot him in the leg. The police thought they had the person responsible, but would soon discover that this was not the case.

On a separate occasion, a transvestite walking alone in the park caught the attention of officers who discovered him





According to the documentary *Serial Killers*, police confiscated this hammer from Pichushkin's possessions and found evidence in the skull of one of his victims that solidified his murderous claims



**ABOVE** Pichushkin paced up and down his glass box throughout his trial but sat silently as the jury delivered a unanimous guilty verdict

to be carrying a hammer. He claimed it was for protection, but the police suspected a much more sinister motive and believed that they had caught their Bitsa Park predator. However, a 24-hour investigation into the suspect's alibi made it clear that he was not responsible for the murders. Investigating officers felt the pressure as their bosses' demands for answers and the attention of worldwide media intensified. By now everyone in Russia knew of the savage attacks in Bitsa Park.

38-year-old supermarket worker Larissa Kulagina was the next victim to be discovered. Kulagina worked with Pichushkin at the supermarket, and when her shift had finished, she became engrossed in conversation after her colleague offered her a cigarette. The two went for a walk in the biting cold air through the park. All of a sudden, Kulagina became aware that the laughter and noise of Bitsa Park was a distant echo through the trees. The malevolent grimace on Pichushkin's face as he muttered something ominous brought her back to reality, as she realised just who she was keeping company with. Pichushkin later recalled how she clung to a tree wailing for her life. "Are you going to kill me?" she asked looking up at him frozen in fear. Unashamed and unconcerned for the woman in front of him, he replied, "Yes."

The fact that the Bitsa Maniac had turned his attention to killing women startled and alarmed the police, but it would prove a definitive turn in the killer's mind set. Police contemplated the identity of the killer, not knowing whether a man, woman or child was capable of such brutality.

When Marina Moskalyeva left for the evening in her bright blue coat to go for a walk with her co-worker, she wrote a note for her son, telling him where she would be and leaving Pichushkin's number in case he needed to get hold of her. She bought a metro ticket and met Pichushkin in the station. CCTV images recorded the pair walking through the station and up the stairs into the street: these are the last recorded movements of Moskalyeva, who failed to return home that evening. When her son became worried, he contacted the number left for him by his mother. When Pichushkin answered, he lied, telling the boy that he had not seen his mother in two months. The next day the police discovered Moskalyeva's body among the trees; she had suffered the same fate as the other Bitsa Park Maniac victims. In her pocket, however, was the metro ticket she had bought just the day before and police quickly set about establishing her last movements, including speaking with her son, who informed them she had taken a stroll with her co-worker.



**"IF THEY HAD  
NOT CAUGHT  
ME, I WOULD  
NEVER HAVE  
STOPPED"**

Pichushkin aspired to be as notorious as paedophile and prolific serial killer Andrei Chikatilo, who was executed for his crimes in 1994 after he was found guilty of five counts of molestation and 52 counts of murder.





**ABOVE** Prosecutors believed that Pichushkin's mission was to kill as many people as possible and called for him to be locked up for the rest of his life

On 16 June 2006 at around midnight, police swarmed Pichushkin's home and multiple officers filed through into the room where he was getting ready to turn in for the night. Without a struggle, Pichushkin allowed the officers to escort him to the station. At first he denied any involvement in Moskalyeva's death, but before long his need for notoriety got the better of him and he began to spill the entire story of his murder spree in incredible detail: "In reality, the Bitsa Maniac, as I was called, it's me." Police discovered among his belongings a chessboard upon which 61 squares had been marked off – one for each of his victims, he said. Pichushkin claimed that he intended to complete the board by killing in order to mark off the final three squares. However, he later claimed that had he not been reprimanded, he would have continued to kill beyond this number. Pichushkin delighted in boasting that he had killed more people than Chikatilo, making him Russia's most prolific serial killer.

### 61 VICTIMS

Investigators could hardly believe their ears. When Pichushkin cracked, he spared no detail of his murders – he talked for hours, days even. In regards to his last victim, he explained how he had sat with her in the park for a long time while contemplating killing her, and he eventually succumbed because otherwise his life would have been torturous. He explained how he was interested in talking to people who he knew were going to die, and the more personal they became the better the experience was for him.

Although police suspected him of 14 murders, he told them he had also discarded more than 40 bodies in the city's sewers. He told them he had enjoyed all 61 of the killings and took them back through the park where he allegedly claimed more than 60 lives a total of 27 times, re-enacting proudly the fatalities. Each time the evidence was filmed for

the prosecution case and amounted to almost 40 hours of footage, as he showed police how he had hit one man over the head with a hammer and how he had stood over him as he made a gurgling sound, circling death in slow agony. While showing them the places he had murdered people, he took the police to areas they didn't even know people had been killed in. Bone fragments scattered among the bushes were the only proof the police had that these undiscovered victims had been there. He proudly showed them another location where he had pushed a man off a multistorey complex. His death, like Odichuk's, had been ruled as a suicide.

Pichushkin was charged. For much of his trial, which commenced in September 2007, he sat in a glass cage – not to protect the spectators who came to watch, but to protect him from the people whose friends and family members he had killed without so much as an ounce of remorse. Despite being dubbed a maniac, he was declared fit to stand trial.

Of the 61 people he claimed to have murdered, ten had lived in the same complex as Pichushkin. Three people had survived Pichushkin, including one homeless man who was lucid enough to identify his attacker and confirm his pattern of murder. In the courtroom, Pichushkin's innermost feelings about his murders were laid bare. His televised confession was shocking to hear: "For me, life without killing is like life without food for you. I felt like the father of all these people, since it was I who opened the door for them to another world." Pichushkin admitted that on various occasions the murders gave him orgasms. Those employed to defend the killer asked for leniency, and that Pichushkin be given a 25-year sentence. It took the jury 40 minutes to find him guilty of four-dozen murders and sentence him to life behind the bars of a maximum-security prison in Polar Owl penal colony in the north of Serbia. The killer is currently partway through the solitary confinement stage of his sentence after the judge ordered him to serve 15 years away from other prisoners.







# THE SLEEPING MONSTER

HIS APPARENT HIATUS FROM MURDER GAINED HIM THE MONIKER 'GRIM SLEEPER' BUT RECENT EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THIS SERIAL KILLER CONTINUED WORKING IN THE SHADOWS AND WAS FAR FROM DORMANT

WORDS JOANNA ELPHICK



**S**outh Central, later known as South Los Angeles, is a 132-square-kilometre region of Los Angeles County, divided up into 28 rough, rundown neighbourhoods. It's a dark place, filled with disillusioned individuals struggling to survive. Poverty and the ever-present easy escape of drugs are major issues. Children and teenagers are constantly lured away from their families into the 'protection' of the territorial gangs. Add a hefty dose of racial unrest and you are left with a hotbed of crime.

The discovery of dead, drug-addled prostitutes rarely made the news back in the 1980s – after all, crack cocaine was sweeping the county and such events were an inevitable by-product. However, unbeknown to the local homicide detectives, the discovery of Debra Jackson would be the starting point of a 30-year manhunt for a truly evil and prolific serial killer.

## ECLIPSED BY THE NIGHT STALKER

The decomposing corpse of 29-year-old Debra was found on 10 August 1985 – but nobody cared. Across town in the affluent Los Angeles districts, a terrifying serial killer, named 'The Night Stalker' by the media, had struck again, killing yet another middle-class victim. Why would the press bother to report on the death of a poor, black drug addict when there were 'hardworking, decent folk' dying at the hands of Richard Ramirez? And so her passing left no mark in the papers.

She was found, as all the others would be, discarded like unwanted rubbish in a South Central alley, beneath a piece of carpet. Since there were only eight homicide detectives working, on average, 130 murders per year in that area, the likelihood of finding her killer was slim to say the least, but the report was filed and details logged. She had been shot three times at close range with a .25-calibre pistol. Due to her decomposition, it was impossible to say if she had been sexually assaulted.

Detectives had little to go on – their only lead was the .25-calibre pistol. And, just to make matters worse, another serial killer started working their patch, known as the 'Southside Slayer'. Luckily for the police, the Slayer's modus operandi was entirely different since he had a penchant for stabbing and strangling his victims.

On 12 August 1986 the body of Henrietta Wright was discovered underneath an old mattress and a blanket in a dirty back alley. A gag made from a torn shirt had been rammed into her mouth and, once again, the killer had used a .25-calibre pistol. She had been shot twice at close range. Ballistics confirmed she'd been murdered with the same gun that killed Debra Jackson. The detectives were left reeling. Surely there couldn't be three serial killers working their turf? Five months later and their question was answered.

On 10 January 1987 an anonymous caller informed the police that he had witnessed a man dumping a woman in a nearby alley. He couldn't identify the man but had remembered the van number plate. Sure enough, police discovered the partially hidden body of Barbara Ware. The van belonged to a local church, but when everyone was interrogated they produced solid alibis. So who was the mystery caller and why had he lied? Meanwhile police concluded that Barbara had been shot with the same gun as Debra and Henrietta. There was definitely another serial killer out there targeting vulnerable African-American drug addicts, and the police had no clues as to who it might be. The next body was found on 15 April 1987. Bernita Sparks



**ABOVE** A mugshot, made public following the capture of the Grim Sleeper revealed a normal-looking Lennie Franklin Junior

had been strangled and then shot with a .25-calibre pistol before being thrown in a dumpster and covered in rubbish. She had been wrapped in a filthy grey blanket and left to rot. An autopsy revealed that she had been beaten about the head before being shot at close range.

As the body count increased, detectives became frantic to rid the streets of the homicidal maniacs that lurked there. Gradually they solved clusters of murders, picking off the twisted perpetrators, but the serial killer systematically shooting the local drug addicts with his hand gun remained elusive, and the longer it took to track him down, the more women turned up dead.

Mary Lowe was discovered on 1 November 1987 behind a cinder block at the rear of 8927, South Hobart Boulevard. Three days later, the link between Mary's death and the other .25-calibre killings was confirmed. The murder coincided with more distressing news. The LAPD had decided to cut the number of detectives on the South Slayer Task Force. It didn't bode well for the handful of officers desperately trying to find their own killer – and clues, like the Slayer's investigative team, were drying up.

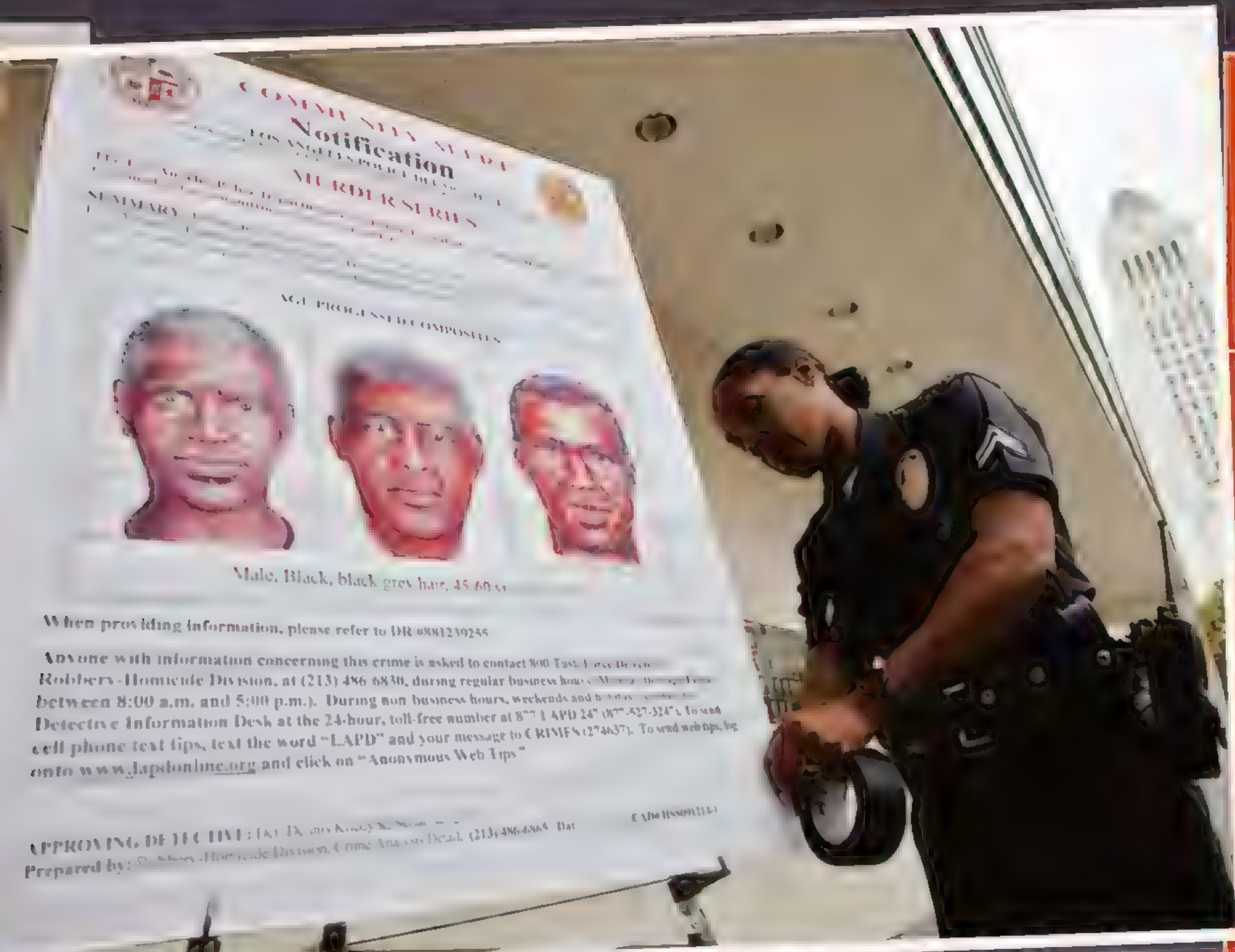
Three months later, a young woman by the name of Bertha Johnson stumbled across a corpse buried beneath a mattress in an alley behind her apartment. She assumed the woman had died of an overdose, like so many other addicts in the neighbourhood. She was wrong. 22-year-old Lachrica Jefferson had been shot twice at close range with the usual .25-calibre pistol. A napkin with the word 'AIDS' had been draped over her face.



# A FORENSIC NIGHTMARE

THE GRIM SLEEPER'S VICTIMS WERE DUMPED IN THE BACK ALLEYS OF SOUTH CENTRAL, HAVING BEEN MURDERED IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION

A murder case that has baffled police for more than 20 years is now being revisited. The case involves the deaths of three women, all of whom were found in the back alleys of South Central Los Angeles. The victims were all African American women, and all of them were found in the same area. The police have been unable to identify the killer, and the case has become a local legend. The police have been unable to identify the killer, and the case has become a local legend. The police have been unable to identify the killer, and the case has become a local legend.



**“THE DETECTIVES WERE LEFT REELING. SURELY THERE COULDN'T BE THREE SERIAL KILLERS WORKING THEIR TURF? FIVE MONTHS LATER AND THEIR QUESTION WAS ANSWERED”**

Like a hideous reoccurring dream, 18-year-old Alicia Alexander's body was found in an alley near Western Avenue. The police waited for confirmation that the victim had been murdered with the same weapon, but in their hearts they already knew the answer. However, they did have something new to add to the file. A witness had seen Alicia get into a 1974 or maybe 1975 rust-coloured Ford Pinto five days before the body was discovered. Considering the state of decomposition, this would probably have been the last time anyone had seen her alive.

## THE SURVIVOR

The few remaining police officers left to deal with the case had gathered together the pitifully weak forensic evidence and created an impressive profile. The killer clearly had a penchant for a particular type of victim: all the women were of Afro-Caribbean origin. They were down on their luck, struggling to survive on a cocktail of drink and drugs. Toxicology reports showed that each one had tested positive for cocaine and alcohol. This made them vulnerable and desperate – easy targets for a calculating hunter.

They had all been shot in the chest in an almost identical position. The killer had probably murdered them while he was sitting next to them in his car. This explained the close range and exact location of each of the entry wounds. Residue on the skin suggested that the gun had been pushed right up against their flesh first, before the trigger was pulled. None of the women were wearing undergarments and their tops had

been re-arranged, so that their breasts were exposed. There was clear sexual motivation mixed with an unwavering need for total control.

The car would be the primary crime scene where all the key forensic evidence could be obtained. Find the car, find the killer. And now they had a make and colour to search for. When pressed, the witness had yielded more valuable recollections. The car's windows had been tinted or possibly covered by a curtain of sorts. There was a spot on the right front fender that looked like a repair job. A sketch was drawn up and sent out to all patrol officers working the area, but nothing came up. The detectives needed a break and, two months later, they got one.

Enietra Washington was a tall, feisty woman who worked hard and played hard. Somehow, she was managing to singlehandedly bring up two children, look after an elderly neighbour and still slip in a little quality fun time. Saturday 19 November was to be her night off, and she intended to spend it at a party with her best friend, Lynda Hoover. They had agreed to meet at Lynda's house that evening and so, having dropped her kids off at the babysitter's, she started the short walk to 84th Street and Denker Avenue.

As she wandered along the sidewalk she noticed an orange Ford Pinto crawling on the road alongside her. The window was rolled down and the driver offered her a lift. Enietra didn't talk to strangers in cars as a rule and she told him that if he had something to say to her he should pull over and get out, so that she could look him in the eye. To her surprise, he did just that.

**ABOVE-LEFT** Police officers put up posters requesting any information regarding the 1985-2007 murders. The killer's image had been aged accordingly to help the public identify him



Enietra later claimed that she had always been good at assessing characters and thought that this man seemed gentle and “a little dorky”. He looked around 30 years old with short-cropped hair and neat, tidy clothes. He stood at around 1.72 metres and spoke with a soft, quiet voice. Initially when he offered her a lift Enietra refused, but when he offered again to take her to her friend’s house she relented and got in. The car was extremely clean with sheepskin covers although, she noticed, the dashboard had been damaged and there were a number of tools on the floor. The pair drove off but didn’t take the route Enietra was expecting them to take. Instead, they pulled over in front of a house next to an apartment complex. He apologised for the delay but said he needed to pop into his uncle’s house to pick up some cash. He returned moments later and they continued on their journey. What happened next would change her life forever.

When the man climbed back into the car his character altered dramatically. In a snarling tone he started referring to Enietra as ‘Brenda’, but when she corrected him he ignored her, bent down to the driver’s side pocket and pulled out a gun. Before she could react, he pushed the weapon into her chest and pulled the trigger. The pain was overwhelming and she soon blacked out. She awoke briefly to find him straddling her as she lay in the passenger seat, her clothes in disarray. The flash of a polaroid camera followed by the sound of the engine brought her to. They were driving again.

A short while later the car stopped and he leaned over, opening the passenger door and pushing her out into a darkened alleyway. She lay in excruciating pain, as still as possible with her eyes shut tight, hoping that he would assume she was dead. After what seemed like an eternity, he slammed the car door shut and drove away.

Enietra was bleeding profusely, but she was still breathing and she intended to keep it that way. She raised herself up and staggered down the road until she made it to her friend’s

“THE PAIN WAS OVERWHELMING AND SHE SOON BLACKED OUT. SHE AWOKE BRIEFLY TO FIND HIM STRADDLING HER”

house, where she blacked out. When Lynda Hoover came home she found Enietra slumped against the front door. An ambulance was called and she was rushed to hospital.

When the bullet was removed and examined, forensic experts were able to prove that Enietra had been attacked by the .25-calibre serial killer, but this time the police had a survivor who could give them details. For a start, she could take them to his ‘uncle’s house’.

### THE BIG SLEEP

The apartment turned out to be a dead end: the place was used by a constant stream of prostitutes and drug addicts. It was impossible to say who had gone in or out of there that evening. What looked like a fantastic break in the case quickly fizzled out and, although further details of the interior of the car were given, nothing came of it. The killer had slipped through their hands once again.

As time went on, detectives on the case retired and the seven deaths and one attempted murder were relegated to a cold case file. It seemed as if the killer had literally disappeared, and everybody on the force had a different theory as to what had happened. Many believed he had been picked up for another crime and was locked up out of harm’s way. Others prayed that he had died, his body rotting away somewhere. Either way, the murders had stopped and the resulting peace was gratefully received.

14 years later, Detectives Shepard and Ramirez were pulling out cold case files and applying new DNA techniques to see if they could get any hits. They were working on the 2003 murder of Valerie McCorvey, a drug-addicted prostitute dumped in an alley having been pushed out from a moving vehicle. She had been strangled and bitten on the breast. DNA analysis found a match and it shocked the detectives to the core. The name flashing on the computer screen was that of Mary Lowe. The killer was back, but the big question was, had he ever really left?

The police were now searching for any connections linking recent murders to ‘The Grim Sleeper’. Six days later a second hit came up, when DNA linked the previous killing to a murder in 2002. Princess Berthomieux was only 15 years old when she crossed paths with her murderer. The police were now fully aware that the 1980s serial killer was active and, once again, hunting the black prostitutes of South Central. DNA was clearly the way forward, but it would only work if they could link the victims to a particular perpetrator, and they couldn’t find any matches on the federal database. Janecia Peters’s body was discovered on New Year’s Day in

**OPPOSITE** In 2010 the police searched Franklin Jr.’s home, the now infamous mint-green bungalow on West 81st Street. The search was the largest in LAPD history

## THE HUNTER WHO NEVER SLEPT

HE WAS NAMED THE GRIM SLEEPER BECAUSE OF HIS YEARS OF INACTIVITY, BUT IT’S LIKELY LONNIE FRANKLIN JR. NEVER STOPPED PROWLING HIS HUNTING GROUND

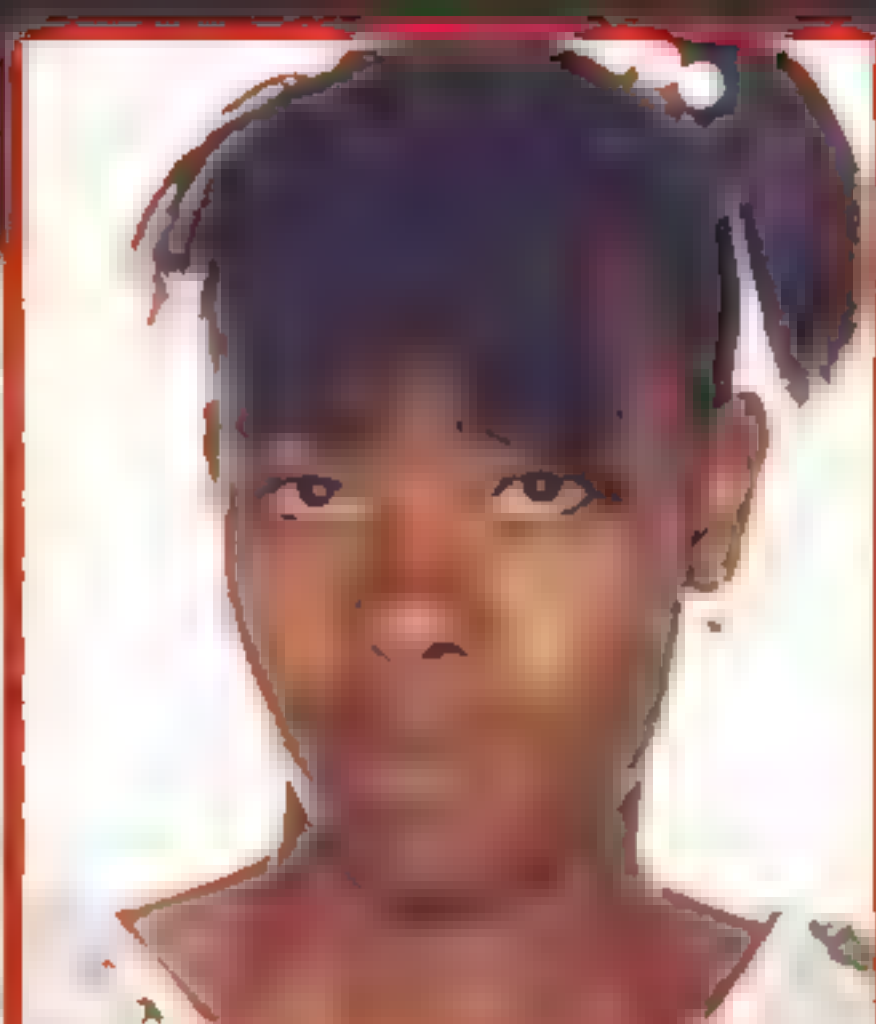
On 28 August 2008 *LA Weekly* released a front page story, ‘The Grim Sleeper Returns’, and a new serial killer was presented to the general public. Unlike the many random murderers of faceless prostitutes, this killer had been given a nickname, and a scary legend: a bogeyman. The editor, Jill Stewart, insisted upon a terrifying name, but it was Christine Pelisek, the award-winning journalist, who came up with ‘The Grim Sleeper’, having been following the story since 2006. It highlighted the apparent

murder spree.

The discovery of over 1,000 photographs, including the ten murders and one attempted murder that Lonnie Franklin Jr. was convicted of, strongly suggest that the killing spree stopped. Police now believe many victims ended up in landfill sites, never to be seen again. 180 images were released to the public in the hope that they might be identified, and during the trial four more victims were named



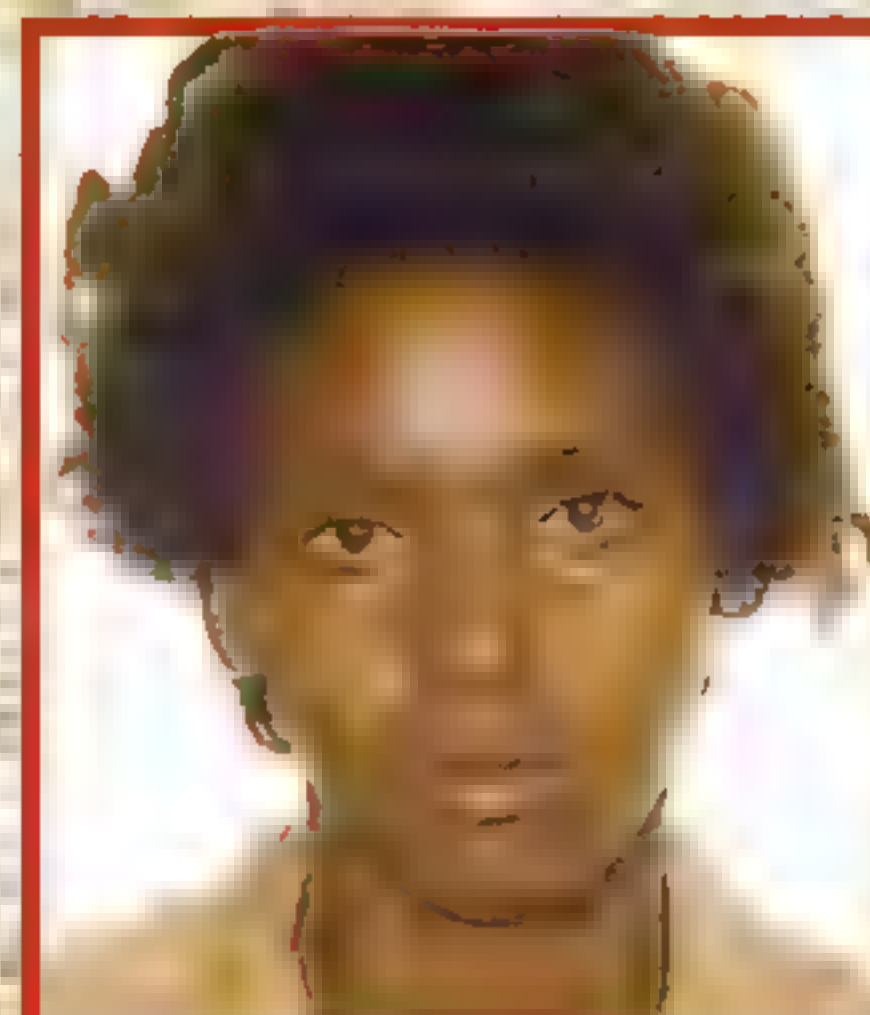




**ALICIA ALEXANDER**  
11 SEP 1988



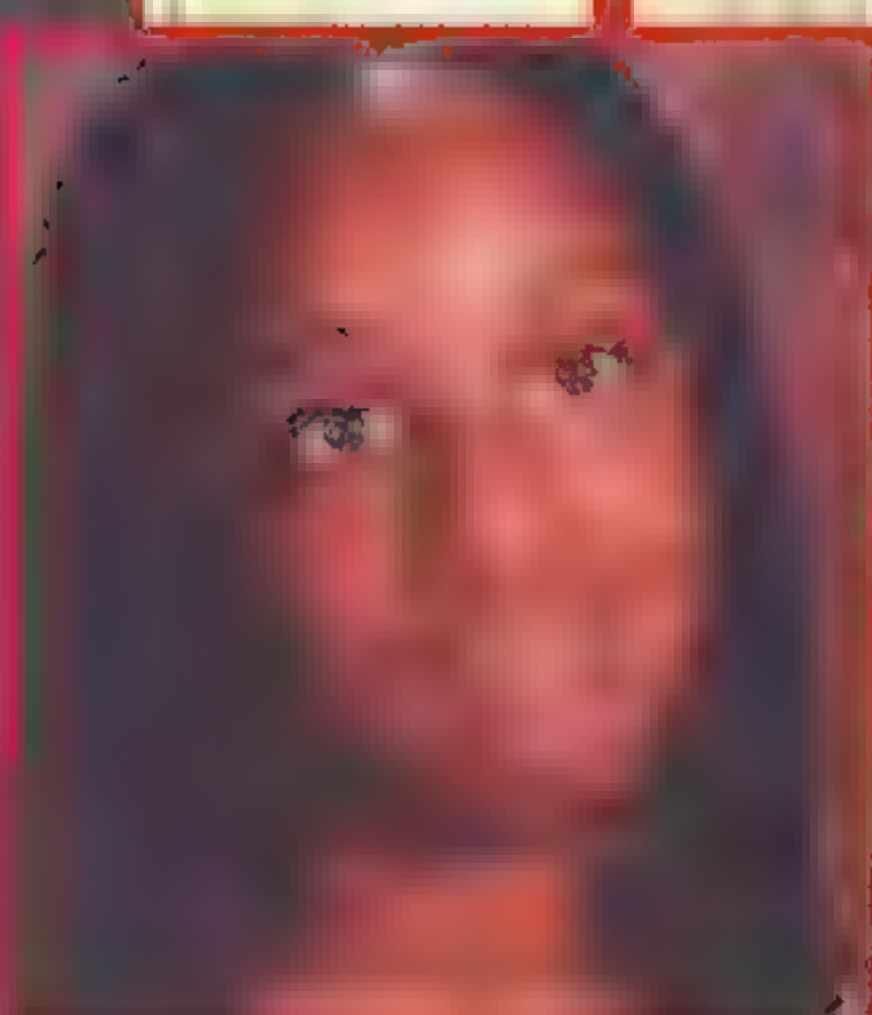
**DEBRA JACKSON**  
10 AUG 1985



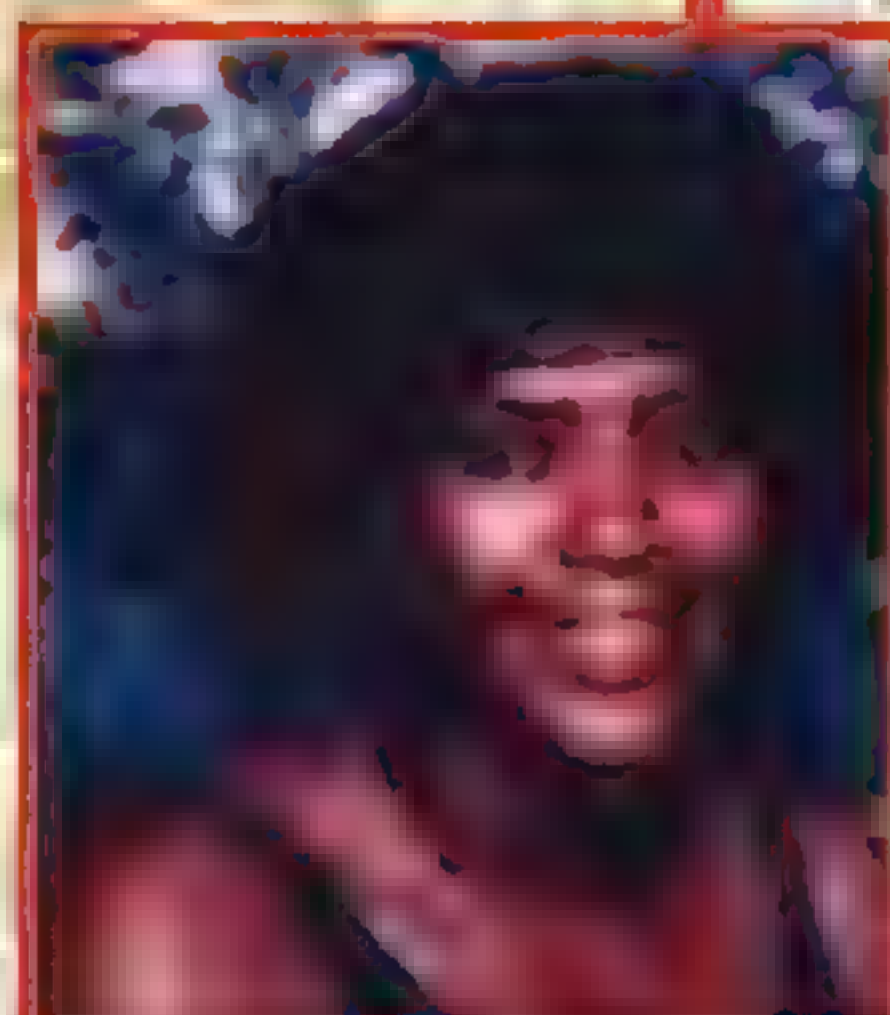
**BARBARA WARE**  
10 JAN 1987



**HENRIETTA WRIGHT**  
12 AUG 1986



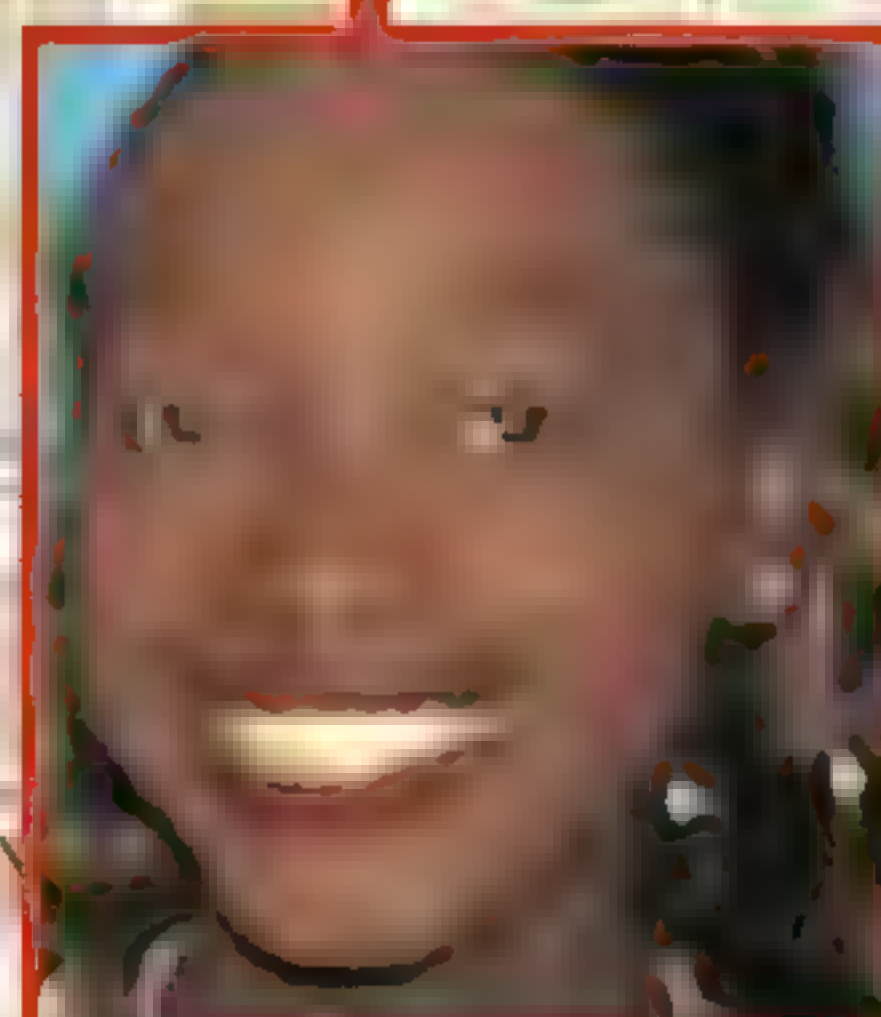
**PRINCESS BERTHOMIEUX**  
9 MAR 2002



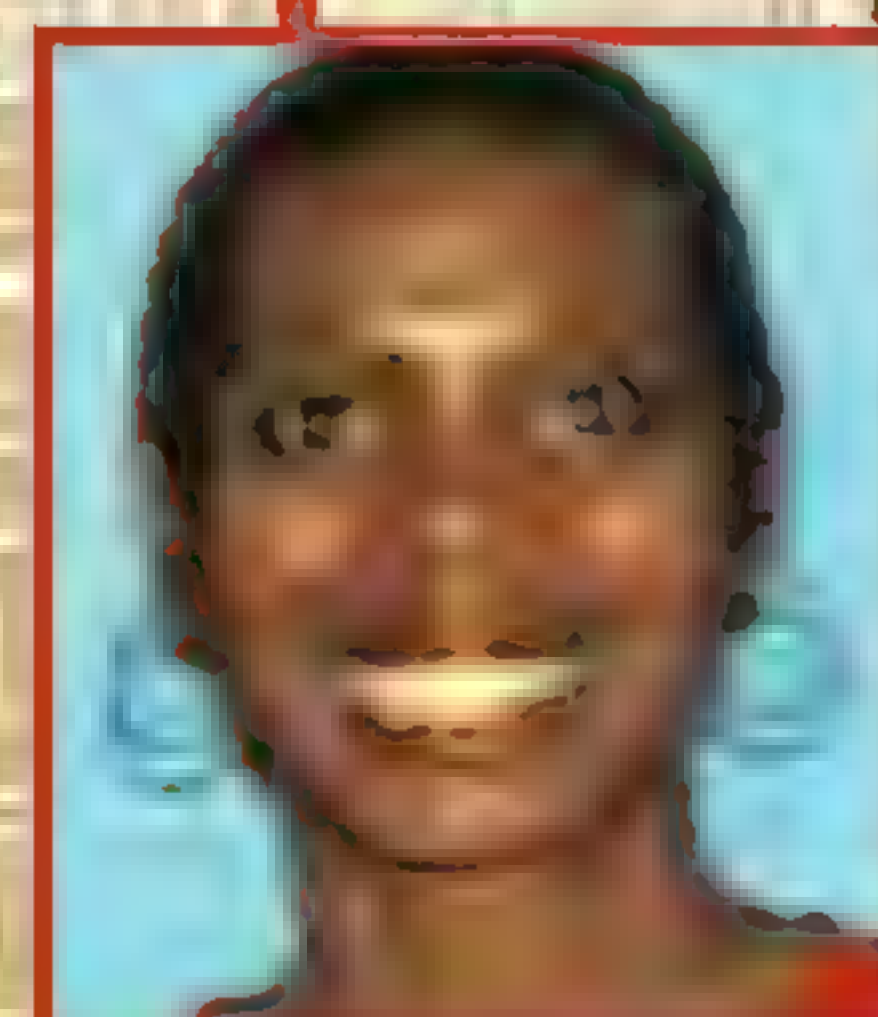
**BERNITA SPARKS**  
15 APR 1987



**LACHRICA JEFFERSON**  
30 JAN 1988



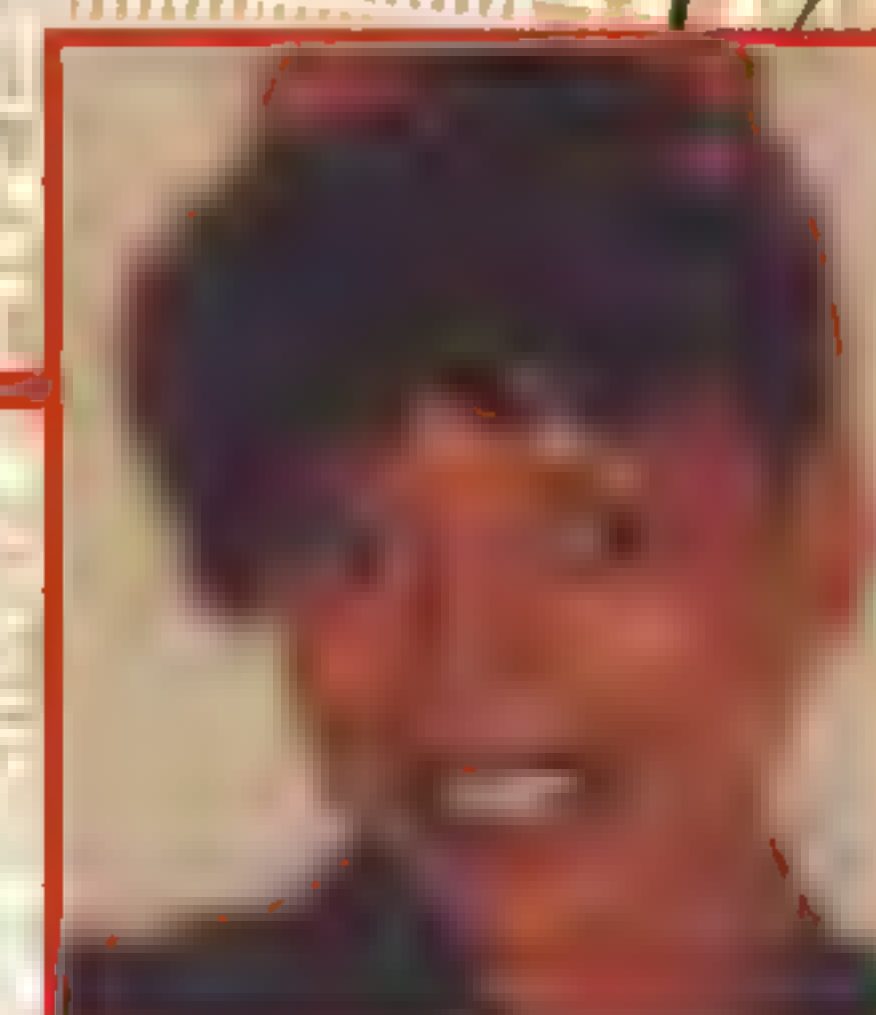
**JANECIA PETERS**  
1 JAN 2007



**VALERIE MCCORVEY**  
11 JUL 2003



**LONNIE FRANKLIN JR.'S HOUSE**



**MARY LOWE**  
1 NOV 1987

2 7

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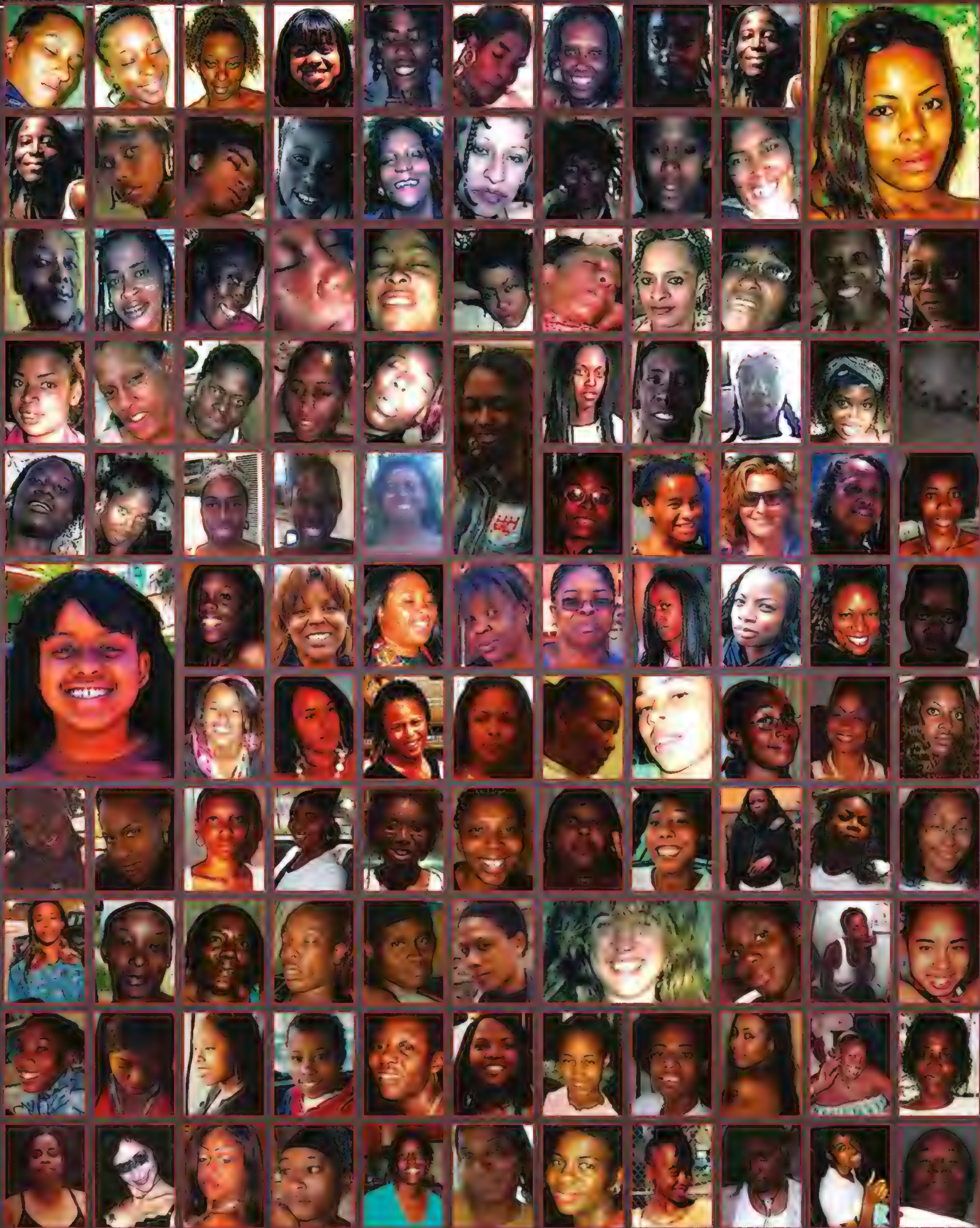
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# DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS







# SOUVENIR HUNTER

TAKING PHOTOS OF THE VICTIM GIVES CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGISTS A FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO A KILLER'S THOUGHT PROCESSES

To take photographs of your victims seems a particularly gruesome thing to do. Is it a common thing among serial killers to keep souvenirs of their murders?

Absolutely. Glatman took bondage shots of three of his victims, while Leonard Lake and Charles Ng made pornographic 'snuff' movies as they tortured their sex slaves over a prolonged period of time.

Robert K. Ressler and John E. Douglas claimed that there was a relation between post-crime behaviour and method of killing. Does the taking of photographs fit into this?

Yes it does, and it really fits in with your subject, Lonnie Franklin Jr. Extensive research has been taken on the type of weapon used and the post-crime behaviour pattern. Findings indicate that killers using a firearm were more likely to have kept a diary of events and, most significantly, taken photographs of their victims. This can be compared with killers using a blunt instrument, for example, who almost never keep souvenirs or take pictures.

But surely such behaviour increases the likelihood of getting caught. Why do it?

The sheer pleasure of being able to relive the experience far outweighs the risk of getting

caught for such people. The images provide tangible proof that they were able to carry out their long-held fantasy, and it wasn't just they had merely imagined killing someone. It keeps the situation real for them. Some killers see the pictures as a trophy – in other words, proof of their murderous skill. This is similar to a game hunter mounting a head on the wall. Others keep the photo as a souvenir in order to play the memories over and over again.

Sometimes the act of taking a photograph is designed to torment the victim by physically taking something away from them. Frightening the victim heightens the sexual stimulation often achieved during the attack. It also reinforces the notion that the attacker has full control of the situation and now owns a piece of the victim.

## BIO ANONYMOUS

### FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST LECTURER

This expert profiler, who wishes to remain anonymous for personal reasons, studied psychology before specialising in forensic psychology and profiling. She is particularly interested in the use of criminal behaviour patterns in order to create a working profile of serious violent offenders. She currently lectures at a top London university.



2007 in a dumpster. She'd been wrapped in a black bin bag and discarded, just another disposable woman to the killer.

A new team was assembled, known as the '800 Task Force', comprising of a carefully selected group of seven veteran officers, with nearly 100 years of combined service. Now the public had been made aware of the situation, the pressure was on to capture this monster before he could kill again, but they needed help. It came in the form of familial DNA searching.

## IMAGES OF EVIL

Familial DNA searching allows the police to broaden their DNA analysis to close relatives of a suspect. This means that even if the killer isn't in the database, if a relative is, they could link him or her to the crime. It's a somewhat controversial method but has been successfully utilised in the UK since 2002.

Tentatively, police explored the new technology, and in 2010 they got a hit. 28-year-old petty criminal Christopher Franklin had given DNA after a firearms charge. His father, Lonnie David Franklin Jr., who was not in the database himself, had been living in the epicentre of the South Central murders since the early 1980s. All of the dump sites were within an eight-kilometre radius of his bungalow. The location was exactly where profilers had envisaged the killer would be living. Officers followed Lonnie Franklin Jr. as he went about his daily business and secretly took the 58-year-old's DNA from cutlery and food at a pizza parlour. Having smuggled it out of the parlour to the forensics lab, they checked it against samples taken from the victims. It was a perfect match. They had tracked down the Grim Sleeper.

While Lonnie Franklin Jr. was picked up and taken in for questioning, a second unit swooped in to search his home. Over 800 pieces of evidence were removed, including 20 cameras, over 1,000 photographs and hours of pornographic videos. While searching the garage, criminalist Genaro Arredondo pulled some dry-wall away only to discover a secret hole containing a photo of a woman, her breast exposed. It was a picture of Enietra Washington, the only known survivor. Detectives were reminded of her claim that she had been roused from unconsciousness by the flash of a polaroid camera. Another picture of a semi-naked victim, Janecia Peters, had been stuck inside a mini fridge. Ladies' underwear was strewn about the garage while a polaroid camera and a box of .25-calibre ammunition were left on the shelf. The gun used to kill the women was discovered inside the house.

Lonnie Franklin Jr. clearly kept trophies of his attacks, and since there were far more images than the ten victims police were aware of, it made them shudder to think how many more desperate women had met the same ghastly fate. A photograph of him smiling beside a landfill site suggested where the remaining bodies might be. But why would he risk keeping such incriminating evidence in his own home? He is certainly not the first to do such a thing. Harvey Glatman, for example, took bondage photographs of his victims. It is thought that such souvenirs become 'tangible proof' that they really carried out their fantasies. Experts also believe that storing such mementos allows the killer to 'own the victim' even after disposal of the body. Whatever Franklin Jr.'s reasons for keeping his twisted collection of snaps, the police were extremely glad he did. Not only would such incriminating evidence be useful to the prosecution, it would



**“ THE STAR WITNESS WAS NATURALLY ENIETRA WASHINGTON... THE WOMAN WHO HAD LOOKED THE MONSTER IN THE EYE AND SURVIVED ”**

allow officers to look into other disappearances and perhaps offer closure to grieving families still waiting for news.

The detectives had caught their man, but their fear that he had murdered more than the ten named victims weighed heavily on their minds. Lonnie Franklin Jr. was duly arrested and charged with ten counts of murder and one count of the attempted murder of Enietra Washington in July 2010, but the trial was still a long way away. While the prosecution started to pull together its evidence, the police collated the photographs found in Franklin Jr.'s home and presented 180 images of women to the public. It was hoped that someone might recognise a face and confirm her whereabouts. If the woman was missing, it could be used as circumstantial evidence in the hypothesis that the Grim Sleeper had never 'slept' at all.

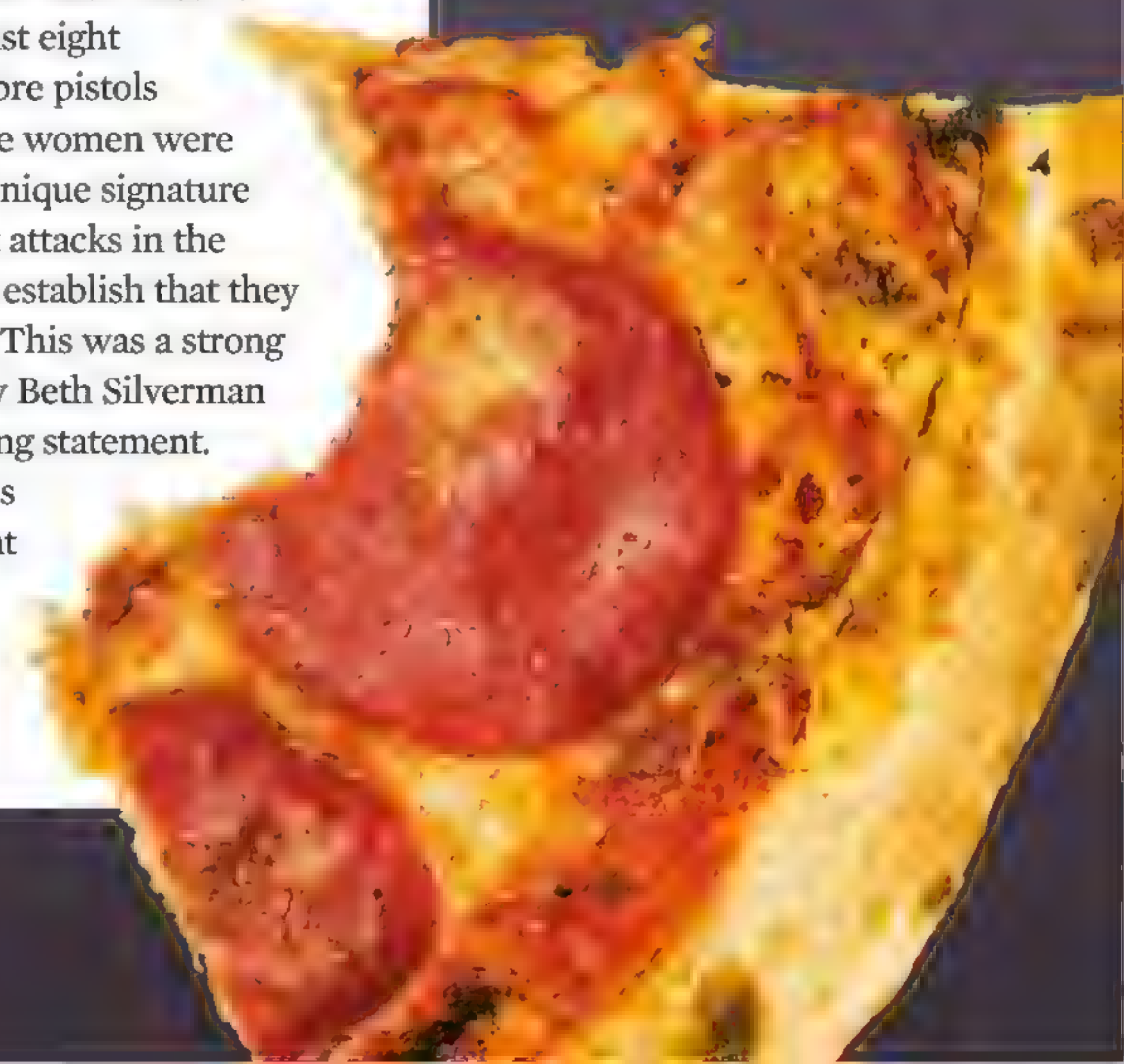
## THE LONG-AWAITED TRIAL

Six years of delays and diversions finally came to an end when a court date was set for 16 February 2016. The prosecution's case was built on DNA and ballistics evidence and the fact that each of the ten victims was linked to Franklin Jr. by one or the other. At least eight of the women were shot with .25-calibre pistols found on his property and seven of the women were tainted by his DNA. By identifying a unique signature on the bullets removed from the eight attacks in the 1980s, specialists could unequivocally establish that they had all been fired from the same gun. This was a strong case, and the Deputy District Attorney Beth Silverman made this perfectly clear in her opening statement. There was really no doubt that the Los Angeles Police Department had caught the right man.

Over 40 expert witnesses were called in to explain the significance of their evidence, from the county

**ABOVE** Each body was discovered in a South Central alley, partially hidden by old blankets and mattresses. The victims were dumped alongside the rubbish, thrown away without a second thought.

**BELOW** Franklin Jr.'s half-eaten pizza slices and soiled cutlery were taken and used to extract his DNA and link him to the murders.





coroner to members of the forensic department. Having blasted jurors with the science, she then appealed to their emotional side, revealing shocking photographs of Debra Jackson's decomposing corpse and a pitiful image of Princess Berthomieux's naked body lying face-down in a filthy alley. She shifted the perception of the victims' lifestyle away from one of morally reprehensible degradation to desperation and vulnerability: in other words, she humanised them. The media had portrayed them collectively as black, drug-addicted prostitutes. Silverman showed the jury that they had been individuals, daughters, sisters and mothers.

The star witness was naturally Enietra Washington. Everyone wanted to see the woman who had looked the monster in the eye and survived. Throughout the trial she held herself with enormous dignity and bravery. She was, after all, the living embodiment of all those who had suffered at the hands of Lonnie Franklin Jr. For the sake of the victims' families seated in the viewing gallery, she had to stay strong and speak out for their loved ones. She felt the pressure keenly but she bore it well, and the grieving audience was both grateful and proud. Meanwhile, the jury were stunned by her chilling account of the attack on that November evening 28 years earlier.

Franklin Jr.'s best friend, Ray Davis, was also a useful witness. He described his drinking buddy as a man who regularly boasted about his sexual encounters. He had always fraternised with prostitutes and often took photographs of them naked. One particular occasion had scared Davis. He had seen a woman sitting on a mattress in the back of a van. Franklin had angrily shooed his friend away, but not before he had seen her face. He believed it had been Janecia Peters. All in all, the prosecution took a month laying out its case.

Defence Attorney Seymour Amster attempted to cast doubt over the DNA evidence, claiming that other male DNA had been taken from the bodies, so how could the prosecution be sure Franklin Jr. was the killer? It was a weak argument, since only Lonnie Franklin Jr's DNA was discovered on all of them, and the jury were not impressed. It was a desperate bid to defend a man who was drowning in the forensic evidence against him. The police had gone from struggling to find uncontaminated forensic evidence from notoriously difficult dump sites, to more than enough to convict, and it was all down to familial DNA searching.

The jury began their deliberations on 3 May, and two days later reached a verdict. Lonnie Franklin Jr. had been found guilty of ten counts of first degree murder and one count of attempted murder. Now it was time to establish what should become of the Grim Sleeper. Should he spend the rest of his miserable life rotting in prison, or would the jury call for the death penalty? During the trial, Franklin Jr. had been linked to four further murders, reinforcing the fact that he had never 'slept' at all and had most likely been killing since 1976. So, did he deserve mercy?

The families' victim impact statements were unflinchingly honest and on 6 June 2016, the jury recommended the death sentence. Judge Kathleen Kennedy appeared comfortable with their decision, stating, "I can't think of anyone that I have encountered... that has committed the kind of monstrous, and the number of monstrous crimes that you have." The sentence was passed and Lonnie Franklin Jr. was admitted to San Quentin's death row. He was found dead in his cell on 28 March 2020 - the results of his autopsy and cause of death have not been publicly released.

**LEFT** Lonnie David Franklin Jr. being led into court in manacles. He denied any wrongdoing at the pre-hearings and failed to comment throughout the trial.







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# MURDER IS MOREISH”

ONLY FOUR WOMEN IN BRITISH CRIMINAL HISTORY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED SO DANGEROUS THAT THEY WERE ORDERED TO NEVER BE RELEASED FROM PRISON: MYRA HINDLEY, ROSE WEST, LUCY LETBY AND A LESSER-KNOWN MURDERER WHO ASPIRED TO THE SAME INFAMY, JOANNA DENNEHY

WORDS BEN BIGGS

It was just an ordinary humpday – a pleasant spring afternoon on Wednesday 2 April 2013 – when 64-year-old John Rogers took Archie, his sprightly whippet-greyhound cross, for his walk near Golden Post street in Hereford. The route took John and Archie along a wooded suburban footpath with streetlights and wrought iron fencing on one side, thicket and tall trees next to the grass verge on the other. As the wide tarmac began to slope downwards, John felt what he thought was a hard punch in the small of his back and he span around, expecting to see a friend or a neighbour having a bit of horseplay with him. Instead, the sight of a young woman with a lock knife in hand took John aback, which was more opportunity than his would-be killer needed to stab him again and again. As a flurry of blows rained down on his chest, John let go of Archie and stumbled backwards under the force of the blows, down the hill and onto the verge. The woman didn’t let up. “My boyfriend told me to do this,” she said impassively, “Look, you’re bleeding. I’d better do some more.” As the stabbing continued he pleaded with his attacker “Just leave me alone please,” but she only stopped after what must have seemed an eternity to John, then took Archie’s leash and led the dog away, leaving John for dead.

Around a 10-minute drive away, 57-year-old Robin Bereza was walking his Labrador, Sampson, on Wesfaling Street in Hereford when he heard the familiar crunch of car tyres rolling to a stop on the grit behind him. Just like John Rogers,

he felt a punch in his back and turned to see a strange woman with a knife in her hand, who continued to stab him in his chest. Unlike John Rogers, retired firefighter Robin wasn’t initially fazed by the deadly assault and perhaps because of his training, was able to react immediately and decisively to this life-threatening situation, fighting back with kicks and punches until his attacker fled. Without a mobile phone and while bleeding heavily from dozens of stab wounds, Robin walked around half a mile back to his wife at home, where he was met by his father-in-law who immediately called emergency services.

West Mercia police responded rapidly, applying the ‘golden hour’ principle of immediate positive action in interviewing witnesses, collecting evidence from the crime scene and perhaps most importantly, identifying and demarcating the search area. One of the victims told police that the female attacker had a distinctive star tattoo on her

**OPPOSITE** One of the photos of Dennehy that was shown to the court in evidence against her. While on the hunt for fresh victims, Dennehy told Stretch, “I want my fun. I need you to get me my fun”

“THE ATTACKER HAD A DISTINCTIVE STAR TATTOO ON HER FACE”





Gary Stretch and Leslie Layton were given lengthy custodial sentences while a third accomplice, Robert Moore, was sentenced to three years for assisting an offender



One of a series of photos of Dennehy taken by Gary Stretch while they were on the run. The scars from self-harming can be seen on her stomach

## DENNEHY'S "FUN"



### LUKASZ SLABOSZEWSKI

The 31-year-old warehouse worker and Polish national became the first of her murder victims on 19 March 2013. Having previously enjoyed drinking and taking drugs in the town centre with Dennehy before exchanging phone numbers, Lukasz's ordinary Tuesday suddenly became a lot more interesting when he received a series of lurid texts suggesting that if he turned up at her address, he would be in for good time. Lukasz obliged, but didn't leave her house alive.



### JOHN CHAPMAN

Having had acquired a taste for murder after her first kill, Dennehy didn't have to look far to find another opportunity to satiate her bloodlust. Her housemate was an alcoholic and an easy target. Lured into a false sense of security by the her stature and attracted by her boozey flirtations, John got drunk before Dennehy used the pocket knife that she had previously killed Lukasz with to stab him to death.



### KEVIN LEE

The same day that she murdered John Chapman, she messaged owner of the Quick Let property firm, Kevin Lee, to visit her at her house, once again offering sexual favours. She stabbed her landlord and lover to death with the same pocket knife used on Lukasz and John. This was arguably the most tragic of the three murders as Kevin left behind a wife and two children. Up until that point, she had only killed single men whose disappearance would not be noticed for a while. The discovery of Kevin's body was the catalyst for the police investigation.

face, and the search team was soon able to arrest a woman with a dog who matched that description near the scene of the second attack. Not long after, her accomplice driver was arrested some miles away.

The air ambulance team responded with an equal level of professionalism as the police: Robin was airlifted to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital and, like John Rogers, survived to tell the tale of the senseless attempt on his life – though their lives were not the same after that fateful day. "I'm not as confident as I used to be. I'm quieter and not my normal self," Robin told the *Hereford Times*. John Rogers was in intensive care with so many stab wounds that the police stopped counting after 30. He told the BBC that he'd been "changed forever" after the attack and that he could no longer play the guitar like he used to. Despite his determination to not "let this woman ruin my life" and befriending and bonding with the person who called 999 after finding him in a pool of blood, John died in November 2014. West Mercia police didn't connect his death with his attempted murder but there can be no doubt that the physical and emotional trauma of it had hollowed John out in his final 18 months. Arguably, Joanna Dennehy's first three victims were even less fortunate than John.

On 18 February 2012, Dennehy was admitted to Peterborough City Hospital's psychiatric unit for three days, where she was psychologically evaluated and given a telling diagnosis of an anti-social personality disorder with psychopathic traits: impulsiveness, rage and violence characterised the 29-year-old's temperament. She was given prescription medication to control her moods and discharged onto the streets of Peterborough – 140 miles and one year prior to from the Hereford attacks, but on a short course to triple murder. She was homeless and had long fallen



into alcoholism and drugs, yet she was thrown a lifeline by 48-year-old landlord Kevin Lee. Kevin leased a room to Dennehy and employed her as a kind of enforcer, confronting tenants who had fallen behind on their rent at Kevin's other properties. She was good at it, too. The fact that this slightly built, 5'4" (163cm) woman could elicit fear from strangers in their own homes was a testament to Dennehy's malignant intelligence. She knew how manipulate, she knew who she needed to scare the daylight out of, and she knew when and how she had to turn on the charm to achieve her own ends. That included Gary Stretch, a local 7'3" (221cm) career criminal whose intellect fell far short of his physical prowess. Later described in court as Dennehy's "nodding dog", Stretch hadn't known Dennehy for very long before her first murder, yet had fallen completely under her spell and was willing to do anything for her, including the disposal of bodies.

Some time between 19 and 29 March 2013 – the exact date has never been established – Dennehy invited Lukasz Slaboszewski to an address in north Peterborough. Lukasz had met Dennehy in the town centre and had told his friends that he had made an "English girlfriend" and that "life is beautiful". No doubt he was expecting to consummate their relationship, though it's not known whether Lukasz died while entering or leaving the house – just that Dennehy stabbed him through the heart inside the house by the front door. She then called Stretch over, who brought a friend, Leslie Layton, to help shift the body into a green wheelie bin outside the apartment block. At one point in the days that followed, before Stretch and Layton returned in a car to pick the body up and throw Lukasz into a farmland ditch, Dennehy opened the lid of the wheelie bin to show a passing 14-year-old girl its disturbing contents. Dennehy wasn't disturbed by it in the slightest.

No more than ten days after Lukasz died, she committed her next murder. John Chapman was a 56-year-old Falklands veteran who lived in the same shared house as Dennehy. She easily talked her way into his room with the promise of being his drinking companion for the evening and she

likely suggested more than mere companionship, before she stabbed him six times in his neck and chest when he had passed out drunk. She recruited Stretch again, giggling down the phone, "Oops, I've done it again," telling him to remove John's body from the house. Stretch took John in his car and dumped him in a ditch in the Peterborough countryside.

Her final murder was later on the same day that she killed John Chapman. Kevin Lee had a wife and family but despite this, he had somehow been sucked into the Dennehy maelstrom and had ended up having an affair with her. So it was dead easy for this cunning woman to entice Kevin from his home at a moment's notice, to the house where she had stabbed Lukasz Slaboszewski in the heart, to murder him as well. On 30 March 2013, Kevin's body was discovered by a dog walker around ten miles away in a ditch near a main road in Newborough. He was wearing a black sequined dress that had been hitched up above his waist to expose his bare buttocks: a very deliberate final humiliation that the judge



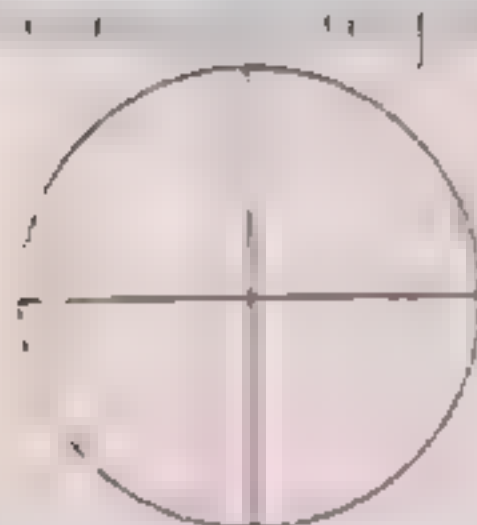
38 Bifield, Orton Goldhay, where Denny killed her housemate John Chapman



The lock-bladed knife Dennehy used to stab her victims to death with



**“FROM BOOKISH SCHOOLGIRL TO SADISTIC KILLER”**





## DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS

**RIGHT** Dennehy was caught soon after the second Hereford stabbing – fortunately her facial tattoo made her easy to identify



The house in Peterborough where Dennehy murdered Lukasz Slaboszewski and later, landlord Kevin Lee





Gary 'Stretch' Richards (left) and Leslie Layton (right), Dennehy's accomplices who helped her dispose of the bodies

in Dennehy's case described as "part of the playing out of your sexual and sadistic motivation". Five days later she was arrested near the scene of the Hereford attacks, having been driven around several counties by Stretch, carrying out a burglary and boasting to one of Stretch's friends, Mark Lloyd, that she "wanted to be like Bonnie and Clyde... she wanted nine victims."

It's hard to believe that this sadistic, stone-cold killer was a mother to two children – and a good, loving mum for a while, according to her daughter Shianne. Neither will you find any obvious watershed in Dennehy's childhood for the pent-up rage and pathological hatred of men she exhibited as an adult: she was brought up in a stable, working-class home with loving parents and a younger sister, Maria, who described her as "very academic". There are some glimpses of problems that foreshadow the person that this happy child would become. Young Joanna began running away from home and hooking up with older men from the age of 13 until she was 15 – when she ran away for the last time and met John Treanor. They had two children before she was 21 and split up because Dennehy was being unfaithful, before reconciling and moving to Wisbech, where the real trouble began. Dennehy began self-harming and drinking heavily, strong lager and vodka for breakfast. She'd leave the house for days on end, spending the night with other men and getting into fights. Once, she convinced a man she'd met to go around to the house to beat John up. Shianne recalls blazing rows that would go on for hours, in which her mother would kick and punch John. The final straw was when Dennehy, in a fit of rage, took a six-inch knife and stabbed it into the carpet. Fearing for their safety, John left with the children for good this time.

With the only stable influence in her life now gone, she spiralled further into drink, drugs and self-harm. For three years she drifted, doing odd jobs and committing petty crimes until she was given a 12-month suspected sentence for assault and owning a dangerous dog – the same year that she had a psychiatric assessment in Peterborough City Hospital.

In court Dennehy told Judge Spencer that "I don't wanna be controlled by anybody. I don't want to be controlled by my lawyers, by the police, by anybody." After pleading guilty to all charges and being sentenced to a whole life prison sentence, Dennehy told a prison psychologist that she, "killed

to see how I would feel, to see if I was as cold as I thought I was. Then it got moreish." Experts seem divided about the deep-rooted reasons why Dennehy transitioned from an ordinary, bookish schoolgirl, to a sadistic killer. In an interview with *Vice*, consultant clinical psychologist Elie Godsi thought that Dennehy must have experienced some extreme childhood trauma: "She is violent and sexually violent – that doesn't happen in a vacuum... women do not end up like this without

a history. Victims become perpetrators because feeling powerful and in control is the antidote to being powerless and controlled."

But criminologist Elizabeth Yardley has a different take: "I've met psychopaths who have been through horrific abuse or neglect as a child and have gone into robot mood to survive. But I've met others who've had normal upbringings, been socialised in a seemingly normal way, and have still done horrific things without any conscience."

## NO APOLOGIES, NO ACCOUNTABILITY

JULIE GIBBONS, STRETCH'S GIRLFRIEND WITH WHOM HE HAD THREE CHILDREN, WROTE TO DENNEHY IN PRISON ASKING WHAT STRETCH'S INVOLVEMENT WAS IN HER CRIMES. SHE DIDN'T EXPECT A REPLY...

"Mrs Stretch,

I have received your letter. I would like to set a matter to rest. Gary did not go along with me out of fear for you. Mine and Gary's relationship was not based on past background. I had no idea you even existed until in court my legal team informed me of a recorded phone call to you. Not long after meeting Gary I made it clear I was not the sort of person one should pursue, he chose otherwise. The Gary I know, love and respect seems to differ from yours. I told him a million times to get away from me and the situation but he flat out refused and got annoyed with me when I did. I had reasons for my actions and your view of me is understandable, but wrong. I tried my hardest to prove I'd manipulated him, but if you know him as well as you say you do, you will know Gary has his own mind. I know Gary tells you what he needs to for his own needs but I resent the fact he used 'threat to you' as an excuse as I told him as we chatted from our cells at court as I said I knew nothing of your existence. I love Gaz and contrary to what he tells you he has strong feelings for me. There was no sexual relations between us as he admits in his letters. My love for Gaz is platonic. I would never force him to do anything. I shall be informing him of our correspondence. An apology would be pointless and meaningless, the effects on your life, having not known you or about you are the responsibility of Gary.

J Dennehy."

**"STONE-COLD KILLER WAS A MOTHER"**



# HOW THEY CAUGHT THE **GOLDEN STATE KILLER**

FOR DECADES HE EVADED JUSTICE, BUT A NEW DNA TECHNIQUE HAS FINALLY CRACKED THE CASE OF CALIFORNIA'S INFAMOUS SERIAL KILLER. HOW DOES IT WORK AND WHY HAS IT PROVED SO CONTROVERSIAL?

WORDS NELL DARBY







**O**n Wednesday 24 April 2018, police knocked at the door of an elderly man living in anonymous surroundings in the community of Citrus Heights, some 126 kilometres northeast of Sacramento in northern California. The septuagenarian was in the middle of cooking a roast dinner, but he would never get around to eating it. Instead, he was arrested and charged with an initial eight murders across four different Californian locations.

He seemed an unlikely murderer at first; 72 years old, not in the best of health, balding and with a mouth so downturned it made him look permanently glum. He was also a former policeman – surely a man who had worked on the right side of the law could not have committed murder? But then more facts emerged: Joseph James DeAngelo may have been a retiree with a quiet suburban life, but his police career had ended with an ignominious firing from the Auburn Police Department. He was now the main suspect in more than 175 crimes committed over a decade between 1976 and 1986, and it was the increasing popularity in the use of genealogy websites to locate individuals' family members and ancestors that had finally led police investigators to him.

Six days before his arrest Joseph James DeAngelo went to visit his local craft store, the Hobby Lobby in Roseville, California. It was a day like any other; he drove from his home to the Hobby Lobby parking lot, but as he pulled up he had no idea that waiting nearby were a team of investigators. Once inside the store, he didn't see the police make their way to his car to swab the driver's side handle. It was this swab that would later prove crucial.

It was sent for testing and was matched to a sample recovered from one of the crime scenes of the notorious Golden State Killer. Five days later they found a tissue in DeAngelo's trash can outside his house and sent that off to be examined. Both samples matched this elderly man to the scene of a crime that had gone unpunished for nearly 40 years – the rape and murder in 1980 of 33-year-old interior decorator Charlene Smith, who was killed alongside her attorney husband Lyman.

This was the last in a series of actions taken by police to locate and arrest a man suspected of being one of America's most wanted criminals for decades. Earlier that year they had managed to compare genetic profiles from genealogy databases to crime scene DNA, and these had narrowed down their list of suspects.



**“ BOTH SAMPLES MATCHED THIS ELDERLY MAN TO THE SCENE OF A CRIME THAT HAD GONE UNPUNISHED FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS ”**

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

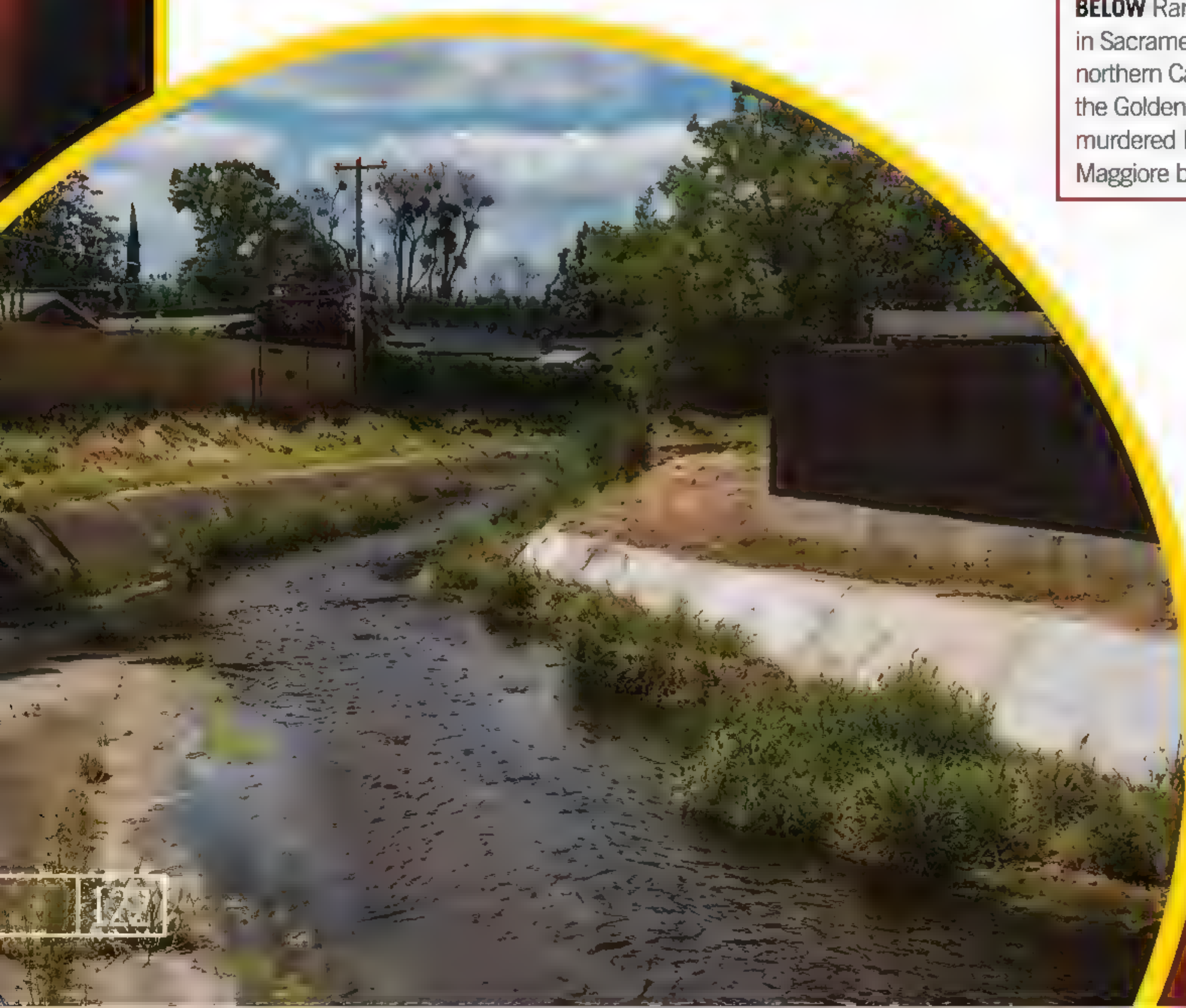
The 1970s and 1980s saw a spate of rapes and murders that were originally attributed to four attackers – the Visalia Ransacker, the Golden State Killer, the East Area Rapist and the Original Night Stalker. All four, it is now believed, were the same solitary man. Initially, in the early to mid 1970s, this individual engaged in a series of burglaries in Visalia. Most of the offences involved ransacking, stealing personal items and generally ignoring money, although coins were sometimes stolen. However, it was also in Visalia that the first murder occurred – that of Claude Snelling, who was shot in the autumn of 1975 while attempting to stop his teenaged daughter from being abducted. In August 2018 murder charges were filed against DeAngelo in this case.

This sole murder marked the end of the crime spree in Visalia. This is because in 1976 DeAngelo relocated to the Sacramento area and was soon searching middle-class areas at night for women to rape. After identifying a potential victim, he might undertake a reconnaissance of their property, looking through windows or even break into them, unlocking the windows and planting items for him to use there later. He planned his attacks carefully in advance. He might ring the victim, pretending he had a wrong number, or simply learn their day-to-day routines.

As time went on he would choose couples over a single woman, breaking in at night and waking his sleeping victims with a flashlight or a threat. He would blindfold and gag his victims, then separate them in order to rape the woman. He would spend hours in their houses, ransacking their goods, eating their food, stealing their property. He would leave on

**ABOVE** Katie and Brian Maggiore, who were in their early 20s, were chased and shot dead in February 1978. They had been taking their dog for a walk at the time

**BELOW** Rancho Cordova in Sacramento County, northern California, where the Golden State Killer murdered Brian and Katie Maggiore back in 1978

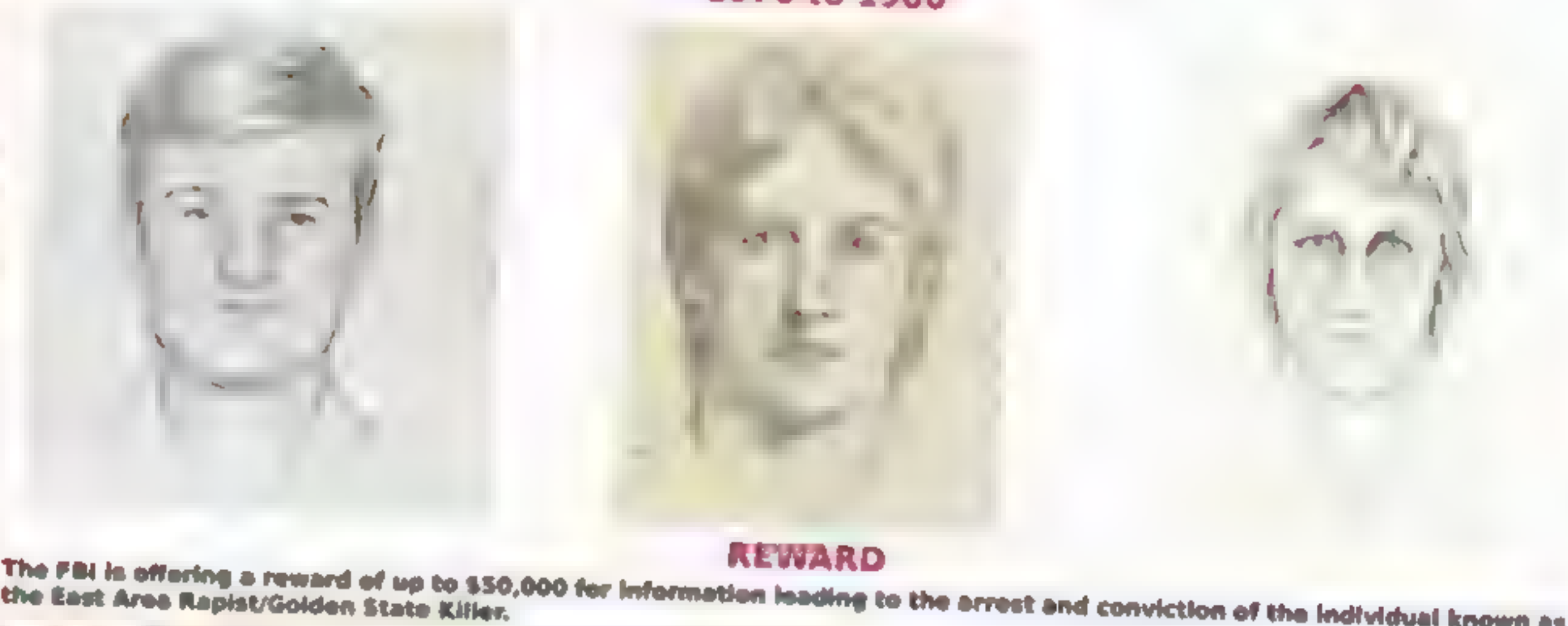






## SEEKING INFORMATION UNKNOWN SUSPECT

East Area Rapist/Golden State Killer  
California  
1976 to 1986



foot or on a bicycle, exiting quietly in order to confuse his victims as to whether he really had left or was still in their home, ready to pounce once more.

Between June 1976 and July 1979, there were 51 reported offences with similar modus operandis across five counties. By this latter date the suspect had become a murderer. In February 1978, a young married couple, Brian and Katie Maggiore, were out walking their dog one night in Rancho Cordova, an area where five attacks had already been reported. They were confronted by an individual, and as they tried to run away they were shot dead. Their bodies were found in the backyard of a house in their neighbourhood.

In the summer of 1979, it appeared that the East Area Rapist had relocated once more, this time to southern California. First, a rape was reported, and then in October a couple survived an attempted murder in Goleta, Santa Barbara County. Between December 1979 and July 1981, nine people were murdered – four couples and one woman, Charlene Smith. There was then a five-year gap before a final murder – that of 18-year-old Janelle Cruz – in May 1986, in Orange County. Several of these murders had similarities to the Sacramento attacks, with couples being tied up, women being raped and the killer fleeing on a bicycle.

### A KILLER'S PRIVATE LIFE

While these offences were being committed, DeAngelo maintained an image of an ordinary Californian man during the day. That is until one day in 1979, when he shoplifted a can of dog repellent and a hammer from a branch of the Pay 'n Save drugstore chain in Sacramento. This act led to him being fired from his job as a policeman. He had always been interested in crime, ironically, but as a young man had been more interested in the theoretical, getting a degree in criminal justice after an earlier career in the navy and a spell fighting in Vietnam. The New York state native had worked as a police officer in Exeter, California, from 1973 to 1976. Exeter is a city in Tulare County, and, significantly, the county seat of Tulare is Visalia. It was during the time DeAngelo was working in Exeter that the Visalia Ransacker

**ABOVE** The use of pins to mark the locations of attacks shows how the East Area Rapist – later known as the Golden State Killer – committed offences in targeted 'clusters'

**ABOVE-RIGHT** The FBI previously issued a call for information in their search for the GSK, who had committed crimes over a decade yet had remained a free man

**BELOW** During the 1970s, the FBI collected various ski masks as evidence as they searched for the East Area Rapist – later known as the Golden State Killer

## NEEDLE IN THE HAYSTACK

### WHY DID IT TAKE SO LONG TO IDENTIFY SUCH A PROLIFIC SERIAL KILLER?

The GSK committed a series of crimes over a span of over a decade, and although he evaded justice, this was not because of a lack of action by investigators. Part of the problem was that he didn't commit all of his crimes within the jurisdiction. In addition, his crimes did differ – some were rapes, whereas others were murders, some were committed on women, others on couples. Therefore, not all the crimes were linked as being the work of one individual at the time.

DeAngelo's arrest came, appropriately, on National DNA Day in the US. In announcing it, the Sacramento

District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert made clear that officials had been looking "for a needle in a haystack". At the time of his attacks there was little information to go on: a few details about his looks, but he often wore a ski mask, hiding his features.

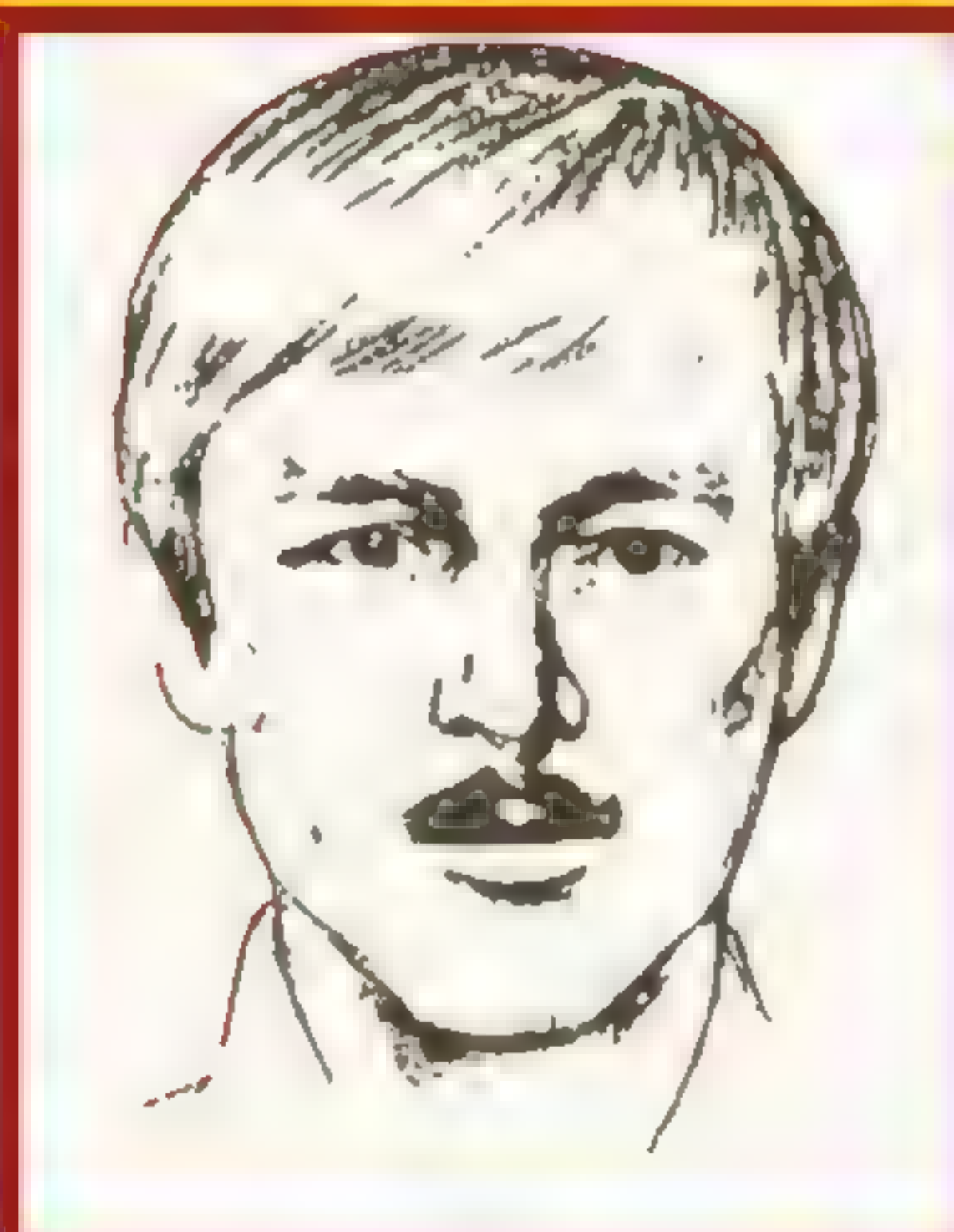
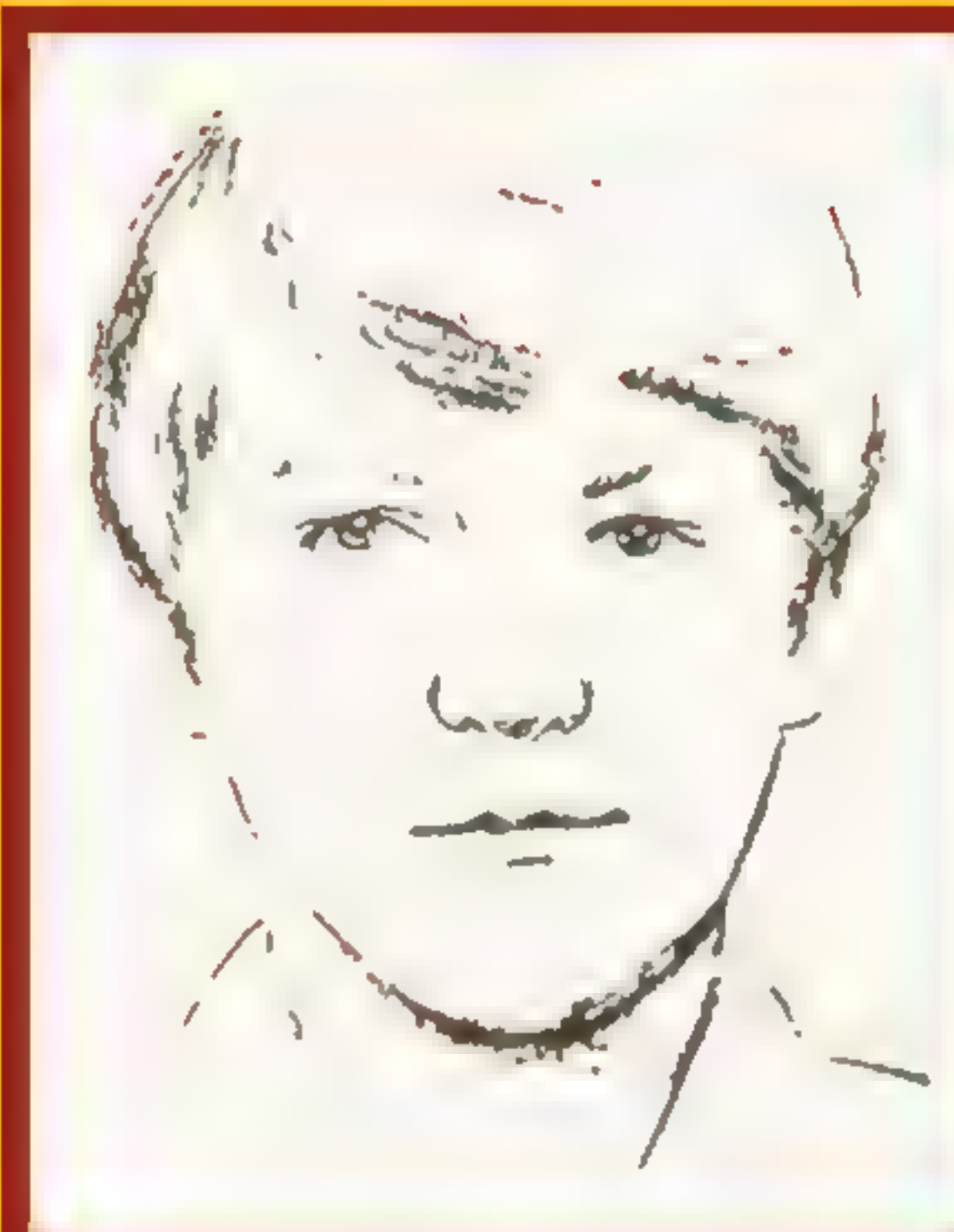
It was only when DNA tests became available that investigators learned that the East Area Rapist and the Golden State Killer were in fact the same person. In 2001, DNA showed that this individual was also the 'Original Night Stalker'. It took over another decade of developments to finally identify Joseph DeAngelo.





# PICTURING A KILLER

THE GSK'S MANY ATTACKS  
RESULTED IN SEVERAL ATTEMPTS  
TO GIVE HIM A FACE. SO WHAT  
DID THE KILLER LOOK LIKE?



## THE MAGGIORE SUSPECTS 1978

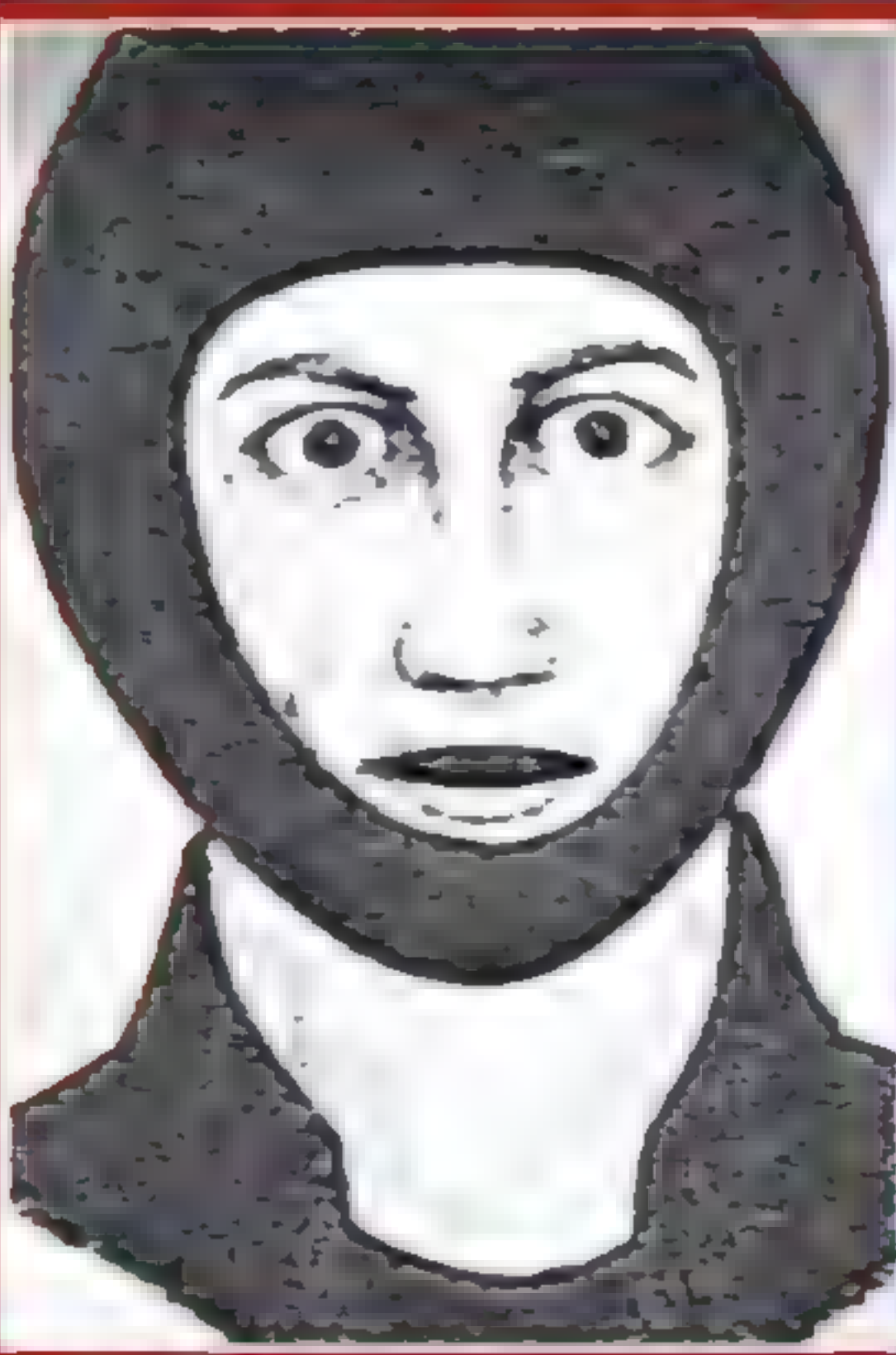
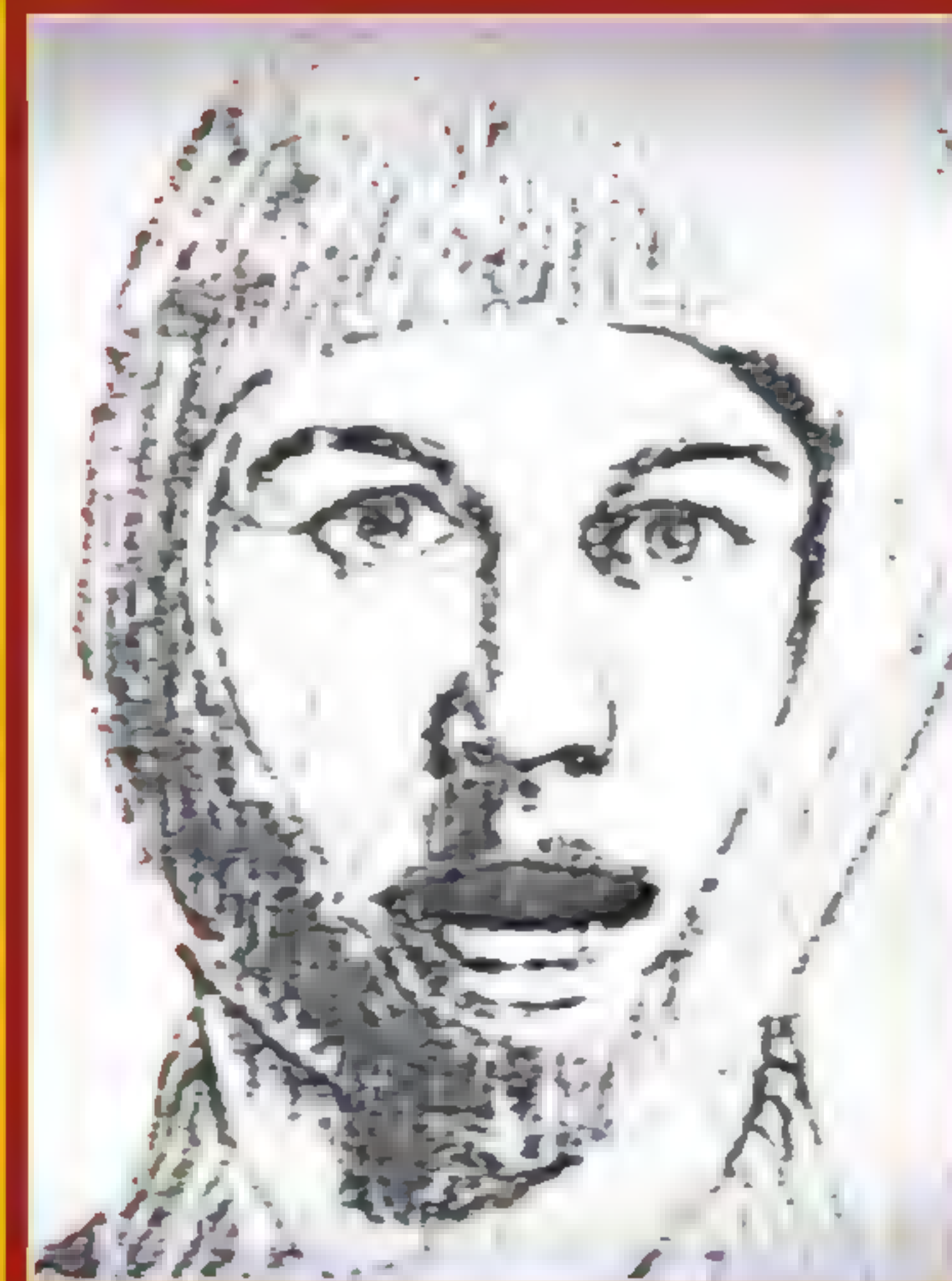
On the evening of 2 February 1978, the bodies of Brian and Kate Maggiore were found in a backyard – they had been shot dead. Two weeks later, *The Sacramento Bee* newspaper published sketches of two young men seen minutes before the shootings made from neighbours' descriptions.

## COMPOSITE SKETCHES 2016

Three primary composite sketches have been produced of the Golden State Killer, taken from witness accounts. When the FBI reopened the case in 2016 they focused on these sketches, but their differences show the doubt that existed about the suspect's looks. However, he was described as having blond or light brown hair.

## OPEN MASK 1977

During an attack in Rancho Cordova on 18 March, the victim was able to see the face of the attacker and described the man as having 'wide eyes and a wide mouth, wearing a ski mask'. The mask was dark green, and although it exposed his nose, eyes, and mouth, it covered his chin.



## DIFFERENT FACES 1970s

From descriptions provided by victims and neighbours, several composite sketches of the Golden State Killer have been compiled. Although the FBI gave more credence to three sketches than to others, they illustrate how difficult it is to get a consistent picture from traumatised individuals, or those who only saw a man fleetingly or in the dark.



started committing crimes. In 1976, DeAngelo moved into the jurisdiction of the Auburn Police Department in the Greater Sacramento area. A series of crimes duly started in the vicinity.

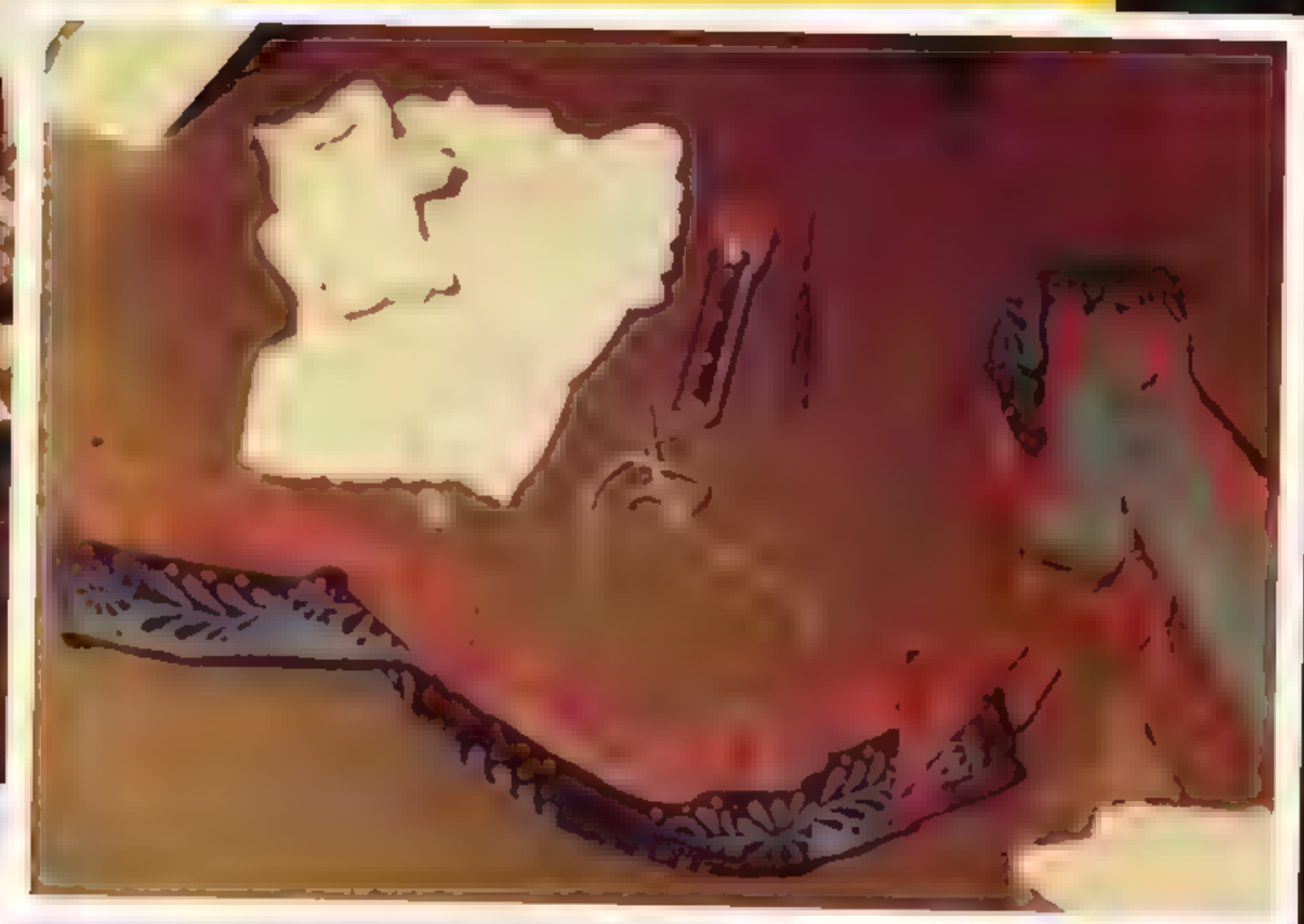
DeAngelo's private life had seemed like anyone else's though. He had served in the military, gone to university, become a police officer. He had married his wife Sharon in 1973 and they had three daughters together. Sharon had then become an attorney. In 1991, the couple separated, later divorcing. At the time of his arrest, DeAngelo was still living with a daughter and granddaughter and working at a supermarket's distribution warehouse. He was known by his co-workers as a serious, unsmiling man with a very short fuse, but he wasn't seen as anything out of the ordinary, certainly not a violent man.

Meanwhile, the northern California rapes and the southern California murders became cold cases. Although some suspected the East Area Rapist was the same individual as the Original Night Stalker, nobody had been charged with being either. The search for the man responsible continued.

**“ POLICE RESTRICTED THEIR SEARCH TO AGE AND LOCATION. ONE INDIVIDUAL WAS RULED OUT BY A RELATIVE'S DNA TEST, MEANING THERE WAS JUST ONE LEFT: JOSEPH DEANGELO ”**

In 2011, DNA technology had developed to the extent that the northern California rapes could be linked to the murders in the southern part of the state, and five years after that, in 2016, a task force was created by the Sacramento County DA, Anne Marie Schubert, to help find him. The FBI, which offered a \$50,000 reward for information relating to the GSK, described him as being white, tall and of an athletic build and possibly with an interest in law enforcement techniques.

The description matched Joseph DeAngelo, but it was only in 2018 that a break in the case led police to him,



and that was the use by police of genetic information on a 'consumer genealogy website' that narrowed the list of suspects substantially.

### GENETIC GENEALOGY

Genetic genealogy – the use of DNA testing combined with older genealogical methods in order to find relations and

**ABOVE-LEFT** A Sacramento home, burgled by the 'East Area Rapist', later known as the Golden State Killer. He usually took coins, jewellery and, more worryingly, the victims' identification

**ABOVE-RIGHT** Evidence found at the scene of one of his crimes included a knife, zip ties and a torch. The GSK would stake a property out, break in and stash items for him to use during his attack

ancestors – is a relatively new field but one that is growing in popularity. It is also regarded as part of forensic genealogy – the use of forensic techniques as applied to family history. Genealogical DNA tests have been offered for nearly 20 years, and over 12 million people, primarily in America, have so far had their DNA tested for genealogy purposes. Direct-to-consumer genetic DNA testing is offered by several companies, including AncestryDNA, a subsidiary of the Ancestry.com genealogy company, which claims to have 7 million customers. The tests are attractive because of their

## JUSTICE FOR APRIL

A LONG-COLD MURDER CASE OF A YOUNG INDIANA GIRL IN APRIL 1988 HAS BEEN GIVEN NEW LIFE BY THIS NEW TECHNIQUE



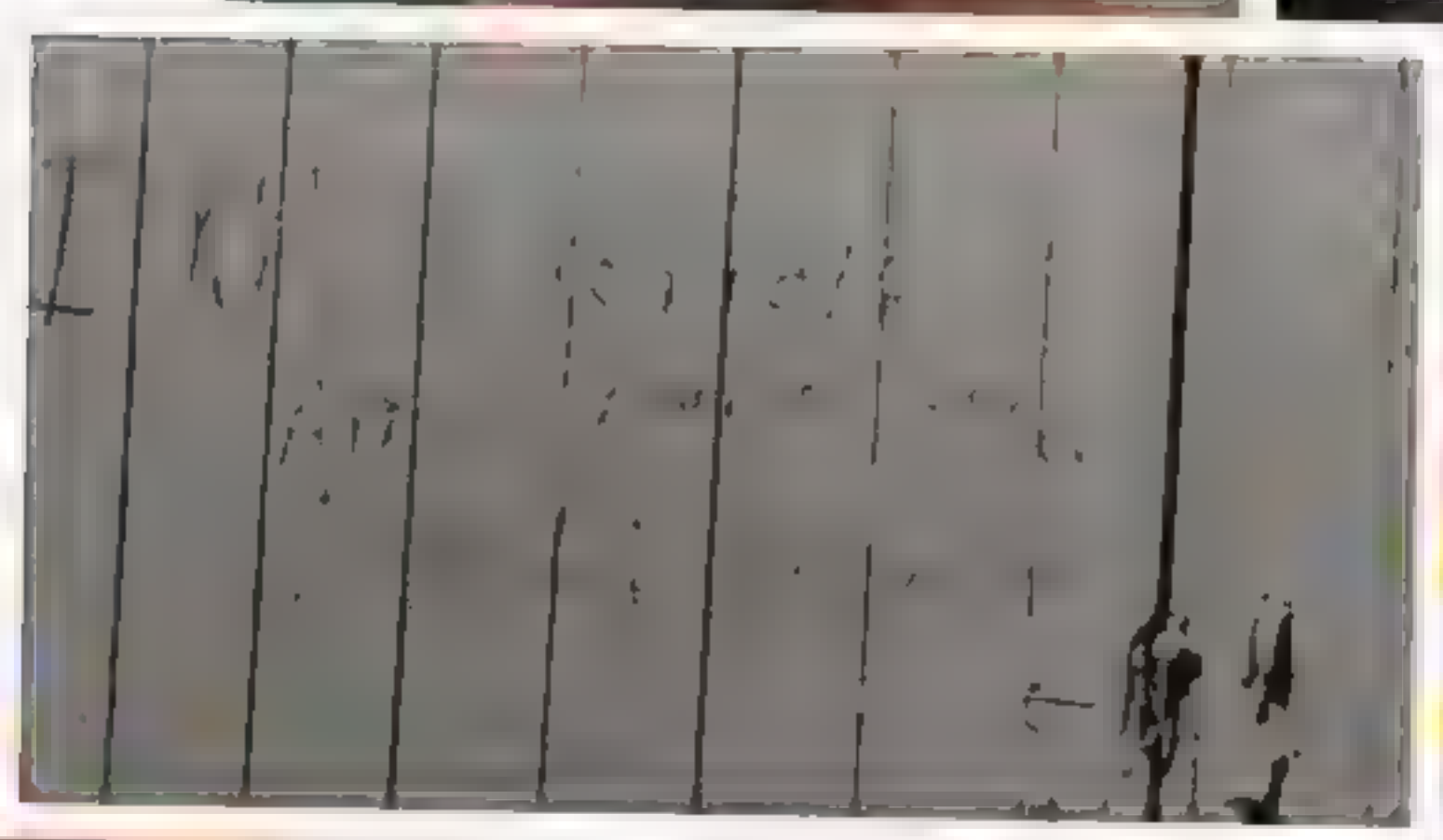
She was an eight-year-old girl living in a safe community in Fort Wayne, Indiana, surrounded by family and friends. Today, she should have been in her early 40s, probably still living in that community, perhaps married and with children of her own. Instead, her life came to an abrupt and violent end one day in April 1988.

It was April Fools' Day, and April Tinsley was walking to a friend's home when she was accosted by a man and abducted. It was three days before her body was found lying in a ditch some 32 kilometres from her home. She had been raped and strangled, and her killer had also sexually assaulted her after she died.

DNA evidence was retrieved from her underwear as part of the initial investigation into her death, but despite this police were unable to track down a suspect in the case. The murder became a notorious cold case, despite the killer apparently leaving goading messages for law enforcement officials: two years after

April's death, a message was found on a barn near to where April's body had been found. In crayon was written an admittance of guilt over the murder and a threat to kill again. Then, over a decade later, other, frightening notes were found on the possessions of young girls, threatening them. Some also had used condoms or photographs of the writer's body with them. In at least one note, the writer claimed to have raped and killed April, with the recipient being 'my next victim'. The notes were badly written – the writer didn't use joined-up writing and had poor spelling.

In 2018, using techniques similar to those used in the GSK case, John D. Miller, by now aged 59 but only in his 20s at the time of April's death, was charged with murder and child molestation. Her mother Janet, who feared nobody would ever be arrested in connection with her daughter's death, now knew justice was within reach after 30 long years.





# "THERE'S ALWAYS EVIL PEOPLE"

PODCASTER MIKE MORFORD SAYS GENETIC GENEALOGY WON'T STOP CRIME, BUT IT WILL HELP SOLVE IT

**In your opinion, how is genetic genealogy, or forensic genealogy, changing the way in which police investigate crimes, especially cold cases?**

Forensic genealogy is the way of the future in crime fighting and solving. There are very few 'perfect' crimes, and usually, the perpetrator has left behind something that can be used to identify him. With Joseph DeAngelo, he left a lot of DNA, and science, emerging technology and good old-fashioned police work came together to catch him. That has created a blueprint for other investigators of unsolved cold cases with DNA evidence, and in recent months many of those investigators have taken that information and run with it to identify criminals who have eluded them for years.

**What are the ethical implications of this kind of work? Are people you've talked to or who have communicated with you concerned about potential privacy issues?**

The ethical implications of this kind of work remain to be determined, but the entire process, when

done correctly and ethically, is very effective.

However, some fear there is a 'Big Brother' feel to the entire subject of DNA and genealogy. Some are reluctant to add their DNA to an open source DNA database, seemingly convinced that somehow it will be misused.

On a personal level, my thinking is, if you haven't done anything wrong, why would you care if it helps identify a monster? How can you not get on board with wanting to get these people off the street? As an advocate for victims of crime and their families, who deserve justice, I am happy to endorse the use of genetic genealogy.

**What are the cold cases you'd love to see solved using genetic genealogy?**

That's a great question – the Zodiac Killer, for sure. It's one of America's biggest true crime mysteries, one that has fascinated people for the past 50 years. However, I have so many cases I hope to see solved – older ones, like the 1975 murder of Lindy

Sue Biechler in Pennsylvania, or newer ones, such as the 2017 murders of Liberty German and Abigail Williams in Delphi, Indiana. There will always be evil people committing evil crimes, but it would be refreshing for them not to escape identification for decades.

## BIO MIKE MORFORD



Mike is a US-based true crime writer, researcher and blogger ([truecrimeguy.com](http://truecrimeguy.com)). He hosts or co-hosts podcasts including *Criminology*, *The Murder In My Family* and *Crimesphere*. This autumn, season 4 of *Criminology* will discuss the use of forensic genealogy in solving cases.

**RIGHT** Encouraged by the arrest of DeAngelo, private investigators in the US – such as Jason Jensen, pictured here – are now pushing for family historians to upload their genetic information to DNA databases

**BELOW** DeAngelo served as an officer of the Exeter Police in California from 1973 to 1976 after completing 32 weeks of training



simplicity – both AncestryDNA's kit, and that offered by another provider, 23andme, involve spitting into a tube before sending it off, and several weeks later you can access the results online.

Another provider, MyHeritage, requires a cheek swab rather than a saliva sample. The test results let you link to others with family trees or DNA results online, allowing you to locate relatives, from parents to distant cousins.

Although genetic genealogy originated as a benign way of finding out more about an individual's family, it is also a logical way to help trace murder victims. One group, the DNA Doe Project, aims to help give a name to unidentified murder victims using volunteers from the genetic genealogy community to help generate information based on degraded DNA. The project recently established the identity of a young woman who was murdered in Ohio in 1981.

Known as 'Buckskin Girl' for decades, DNA obtained from a blood sample during the victim's autopsy was uploaded to a public genealogy database. From this, the project team was able to identify an individual and then looked for potential victims among the relatives listed on another genealogy website, Ancestry. The victim was subsequently identified as 21-year-old Marcia Lenore King of Arkansas.

The DNA Doe Project has showed the potential of genetic genealogy with unidentified victims, but law enforcers have similarly been recognising its value in identifying perpetrators of crime, as has been proved in the GSK case. Where these tests and results come in useful to police is in tying DNA from crime scene evidence to the DNA tests an individual may have done online using one of the genealogy sites, especially if they have then uploaded the results – the raw DNA data – to a site such as GEDmatch. Therefore, police detectives have been turning to genetic genealogy



in order to search out distant relatives of the unknown perpetrator in a cold case by looking at the DNA that has been voluntarily submitted by others to a genealogy database. They can then locate distant cousins and narrow down potential suspects. In working this way, police do not need a suspect to have previously committed another crime or been arrested and had their DNA tested – they simply need one of their relatives to have been tested and uploaded their data.

In the case of the Golden State Killer, the DNA of this as-yet-unidentified individual was originally obtained after Lyman and Charlene Smith were killed in Ventura County in 1980, thanks to DNA being left at the scene of the crime. Police then compared this to DNA samples from other crimes, such as rapes, not just in the county but across the state of California. This unknown suspect was then linked to crimes across ten different counties. Investigators then input the DNA sample they had into GEDmatch, which contained profiles based on genetic information that had been voluntarily uploaded and shared. These profiles had generated family trees of genetically related individuals, and police went through these looking for leads. From this information they were able to identify between ten and 20 individuals who shared the same great-great-grandparents as the suspect.



They then restricted their search to age and location and were left with two individuals. One was ruled out by a relative's DNA test, meaning there was just one left: Joseph DeAngelo. It was at this point that police put him under surveillance and matched him to Charlene Smith's killing through the two DNA samples. The DNA obtained at the Smith crime scene linked one man with other murders attributed to the Golden State Killer: this man was now believed to be DeAngelo, who was arrested and charged.

Ethically, there are concerns about privacy through using people's DNA results in this way. Individuals submit their DNA not to identify killers in their family but because they want to build their family history, or, in some instances, identify biological family (some people have, for example, identified and tracked down their biological parents or siblings using such methods). Yet now, these family historians are discovering that their DNA could be used by police to identify a rapist or even a killer within their family. Leading genealogist at the Society of Genealogists ([www.sog.org.uk](http://www.sog.org.uk)) Else Churchill, has confidence in the system, however.

"The genealogist always has to balance privacy issues. I don't think law enforcement overrides privacy issues, just as I wouldn't say that genealogical research overrides privacy issues. Judy Russell, on her website [www.legalgenealogist.com](http://www.legalgenealogist.com), points out that all the major DNA genealogy testing companies make clear their privacy policies and rules for using the sites by law enforcement. Nobody, not even the police, is allowed to upload a DNA sample surreptitiously or use a fake name."

On Ancestry, the DNA sample owner is said to control who sees their results; you have to 'share' your results on your result page or invite other users to see them. You can also apply to receive a download of your raw DNA data. Then you can upload this to sites such as GEDmatch, thus enabling others to access it.

In California, concerns have been raised about privacy issues, citing the state's Online Privacy Protection Act. In the light of the Facebook/Cambridge Analytica scandal, further

**" IN ADDITION, THERE IS SCOPE FOR ERROR, WHICH MEANS THE WRONG PEOPLE COULD POTENTIALLY BE IDENTIFIED AS SUSPECTS "**

concerns relating to whether it is ethical to use personally identifiable information in a way it was not intended for are now prevalent. However, it is made clear within GEDmatch's privacy policy that anyone who uploads their DNA may find that it is searched by law enforcers – so you are implicitly giving your permission for your results to be used in this way if you use the site. Whether those who commit crimes would similarly give permission is less likely.

In addition, there is scope for error, which means that the wrong people could potentially be identified as suspects in cases they were not involved in. This is because certain DNA markers can be shared by many people, so matching them against large databases might result in erroneous results. The law might also need to be updated to reflect the new use that DNA profiles are being put to. While in the US there is the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, this only stops insurance companies and other businesses from discriminating against individuals on the basis of their DNA profile. It does not specify that their profile should not be used for law enforcement purposes. Many users of ancestry websites fail to realise that permission to use their profiles for such purposes may have been implied by signing their agreement of long terms of use, which they likely haven't read in full. Else has a pragmatic response to the concerns some have.

"I personally have no problem with law enforcement using my DNA information on sites such as GEDmatch... Nobody is forced to take a test, and I respect their wishes. If anyone has concerns though, I would draw their attention to the rules and policies of the genealogy websites."

Since DeAngelo's arrest, GEDmatch has reiterated to its users that if they give permission for their DNA to be used to build profiles, they might also be used by law enforcement. It has added in a statement to the press that any users who are concerned "should not upload...[their] DNA to the database".

In California, discussion is currently underway to explore whether the state's database should collect DNA from people

**BELOW-RIGHT** In April this year, FBI agents and other law enforcement officials searched the Citrus Heights, California, home of 72-year-old Joseph DeAngelo

**BELOW-LEFT** FBI agents process evidence found at Joseph DeAngelo's home. He lived a quiet life in Citrus Heights but would soon be in court on murder charges





convicted of certain misdemeanours (a mandatory collection of DNA), and a 2004 law already allows for the DNA testing of those who have been arrested for certain felonies, even if they have not yet been convicted. There are undoubtedly human rights issues surrounding the collection and use of DNA profiles for law enforcement purposes, but adherents of the technique argue that the prevention of crime is what is important here, and this usurps concerns about privacy or the rights of those accused or convicted of offences.

## WHO NEXT?

Although the Golden State Killer is the biggest success to date, police and law enforcement officials have been trying to solve cases using ancestry websites for the past two years. In 2016, a woman who had been stealing people's identities was identified partly as a result of one of her relative's DNA profiles being submitted to an ancestry website.

Since DeAngelo was arrested and charged with multiple counts of murder, other cold cases also appear to have been solved with the help of genetic genealogy. In one case, Michella Welch, 12, was killed in the state of Washington in 1986. Her body was quickly located. She had been killed by a blunt force to the head and had also been sexually assaulted. Yet until June this year nobody had been charged with her murder. Things changed after DNA from the crime scene was

to send letters to media organisations might contain saliva from which a DNA profile can be extracted. This profile would then be uploaded to an open-source database such as GEDmatch to see if a family tree can be compiled.

This is not a foregone conclusion given that samples may have been compromised due to prior mishandling, and it may be that they are not complete enough to be used for GEDmatch purposes. In addition, DNA testing of the envelopes was previously undertaken in 2002 to see if a link could be established to one suspect – Arthur Leigh Allen, who had died in 1992. This test came back negative, but it was then discovered that the DNA sample hadn't been taken from the most valuable places – behind the stamp or on the envelope seal. Undertaking a new DNA sampling exercise from these places might discover a new link that could then be backed up by evidence from a genealogical website, which is an exciting possibility.

In a more recent case, it is possible that even the murder of pageant queen JonBenét Ramsey could be revisited. JonBenét, aged six, was found strangled in the basement of her Boulder, Colorado home in December 1996, and the discussion over who killed her, and the provenance of a ransom note sent to her parents, has not stopped since. If relevant DNA samples found on the girl's body could be uploaded to GEDmatch, they might exonerate members of her family who have been accused or suspected of

**“ IT IS POSSIBLE THE MURDER OF JONBENÉT RAMSEY COULD BE REVISITED. JONBENÉT, AGED SIX, WAS FOUND STRANGLED IN THE BASEMENT OF HER HOME IN DECEMBER 1996 ”**

matched to the profiles of people who had submitted their DNA to a genealogy database. One of their family members – by now a man in his 60s – was charged with Michella's death.

The same month, a man was arrested in relation to the 1992 murder of teacher Christy Mirack after a DNA sample from the crime scene was analysed and uploaded to a genealogy database. It matched relatives of a 49-year-old DJ named Raymond Rowe, and when police managed to get DNA samples from Rowe's water bottle, it matched the crime scene samples. And in a notorious cold case, the three-decade-old murder of eight-year-old April Tinsley has also been solved by genetic genealogy.

Such successes have increased speculation about other unsolved murders where genetic genealogy could help track down killers. The most infamous case where it could be used is that of the Zodiac Killer. This individual is believed to be responsible for several murders in the Bay Area of California in the late 1960s, including the shooting of teenagers David Faraday and Betty Lou Jensen in December 1968. In 1969, the killer sent three letters to local newspapers demanding publicity. In a further letter, the individual referred to himself as the Zodiac, but despite extensive police work at the time, his identity has never been established.

Now, though, police in California are trying to get a viable DNA sample from evidence taken from the murder scenes of victims of the Zodiac Killer. Any such sample could then be uploaded to GEDmatch to see if genetic relatives of the killer could be found. In Vallejo, California – where Michael Mageau and Darlene Ferrin were shot in 1969 – the local police department hopes that envelopes used by this killer

involvement in her death. It's clear that genetic genealogy could help with many unsolved cases where police had previously believed they had reached a dead end.

“Every day we hear of new developments on applications of DNA to medicine, and society is definitely having problems catching up,” Else told **Real Crime**. “DNA has already revolutionised the genealogical world, just as the internet was the game-changer 15 years ago. However, nobody would want to go back to the old days of genealogy, with unindexed, virtually inaccessible records in record offices that were hard to get to. I think most people will soon start their family history research with a DNA test – but they will need help from the genealogy educators to interpret those tests.”

In the case of the Golden State Killer, the statute of limitations in California with regard to sex crimes means that DeAngelo can't be charged with the rapes he is suspected of committing in the late 1970s – the statute of limitations was ten years until 2016, and although the law was changed then it is not retroactive, meaning crimes committed prior to 1 January 2017 are still subject to the statute. However, DeAngelo's rap sheet has steadily increased. He was initially charged with eight murders. That figure now stands at 13.

The continuing success in identifying named suspects as a result of genealogy databases means it is unlikely privacy concerns will result in restrictions. In cases where DNA profiles have been established from crime scenes but not matched with databases of known criminals who have their DNA profiles on file, it is another weapon in the police's armoury that will help to bring dangerous criminals to justice and provide the families of victims with closure.







**LEFT** One expert believes DeAngelo may have been inspired to murder and rape women after witnessing his sister being raped as a child. Whatever triggered his spree, he won't kill again



# DEADLIEST PSYCHOPATHS

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